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GEORGE WASHINGTON
BICENTENNIAL EDITION

THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

Sir Alexandria Dec. 17. 1785

The trustees of the Alexandria Academy having considered your proposal of investing one thousand pounds in their hands for the purpose of educating Orphans and other poor children, the interest thereof (Viz Fifty pounds P annum) to be paid in the mean time & applied to that purpose; are unanimously of opinion that the proposal as set forth in your letter of this date addressed to them is very consistent with the institution of the Academy as already formed, and are ready to accept the same, engaging on their part to do every thing in their power to comply fully with your benevolent intentions —

As to the proposition of leaving it hereafter at the option of the trustees to apply part of the aforesaid benefaction to the purpose of cloathing the objects of it, the trustees are of opinion it will be better that the whole be directed to be applied towards schooling them only —

On behalf of the trustees. I am.

Your Most Obed. Hble Servt. W Brown Chairman

General Washington —

Letter from the Trustees of the Alexandria Academy, Acknowledging Washington's Endowment, Dec. 17, 1785

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THE WRITINGS OF

George Washington

from the

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1745–1799

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THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

To CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1784.

Sir: Your early attention to me after your arrival at the Court of Versailles, amidst scenes of gaiety and the gratulations of friends, does me great honor, and excites my warmest acknowledgments. That your august Sovereign, his amiable consort, and the Princes his brothers, should deign to interest themselves in, and wish to be acquainted with the circumstances of my life, is one of the most flattering incidents of it; and affects my sensibility beyond any expression I have of my feelings. If any thing could overcome the present difficulties which impede my desires to pay my respectful homage at your Court, it would be the wish which you say these august personages have been pleased to express to see me there, and the welcome reception I should meet from the nation at large, especially from those characters to whom I have the honor of a personal acquaintance; but I fear my vows and earnest wishes are the only tribute of respect I shall ever have it in my power to offer them in return.

It gave me great pleasure to learn from your letter (of the 12th. of Septr.) that the sword which had been so lately sheathed, was likely to remain in the scabbard for some time, other information according with appearances, seem rather to indicate an approaching storm in the United Netherlands;

which, in its consequences, might touch the torch, which would kindle the flames of a general War in Europe. How far British policy may yield to Irish claims, is not for me to determine. The first, it should seem, have had too much of civil contentions to engage, without some respite, in fresh broils; and the other is too near, and too much divided among themselves, to oppose effectually without foreign aid, especially maritime. But I know not enough of their politic's, or their expectations, to hazard an opinion respecting the issue of their disputes. That they slumbered during the favourable moment, none I think can deny, and favourable moments in war, as in love, once lost are seldom regained.

We have lately held a treaty with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix, advantageously it is said for the United States, tho' the issue of it is not pleasing to that of New York. The Commissioners were by the last accounts, proceeding via Fort Pitt, to Cayahoga to a Meeting of the Western Tribes, who every now and then have bickerings with our Settlers on the Ohio, in which lives and property have been lost. At the eclairissement which is about to be had with them, it is to be hoped a proper understanding will take place, the cause of discontent removed, and peace and amity perfectly reestablished.

The honor of your correspondence I shall ever set a high value upon, and shall thank you for the continuation of it; the occurences of Europe cannot come thro' a better informed channel, nor from a more pleasing pen. Such returns as can flow from the cottage of retirement, I will make you: these indeed will be inadequate; but to a mind generous as yours is, there is more pleasure in conferring than in receiving an obligation.

If Sir, the name of your Sovereign has been committed to your letter by his approbation or authority, you will know how

far my respectful acknowledgments are due, and can be offered with propriety. I wish not to obtrude myself; nor to step over that line which custom has drawn, altho' feeling more respect and veneration for the King and Queen of France than I have powers to utter, I should in that case rest more on your abilities and their goodness to disclose them, than upon my own faint endeavours. To the military characters with whom I have the honor of an acquaintance, I present my best wishes and affectionate regards; at the same time that I never can too often repeat to you the assurances of the esteem and attachment with which I have the honor, etc.[1]

To HENRY KNOX

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1784.

My Dr. Sir: Apologies are idle things: I will not trouble you with them; that I am your debtor in the epistolary way I acknowledge, and that appearances indicate a disposition to remain so, I cannot deny; but I have neither the inclination nor the effrontery to follow the example of great men or St—s to withhold payment altogether. To whatever other causes therefore my silence may be attributed, ascribe it not, I beseech you to want of friendship, for in this, neither time nor absence can occasion a diminution; and I regret that fortune has placed us in different States and distant climes, where an interchange of sentiments can only be by letter.

When your letter of the 26th. of July came here, I was upon the eve of a tour to the Westward which ended in the neighbourhood of Fort Pit, altho' my original plan took in the Great Kanhawa. I found from information, that the Indians were in too discontented a mood to render it prudent for me to run the

[1] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

risk of insult: to see the condition of the property I had in that Country, and the quality of my Lands, were all the objects I had in view. Those in the vicinity of Fort Pitt (for which I have had patents more than ten years) I found in possession of people who set me at defiance, under the claim of pre-occupancy. Another year, and I may find the rest seized under the like pretext; but as the land cannot be removed, altho' the property may be changed, I thought it better to return, than to make a bad matter worse by hazarding abuse from the Savages of the Country.

I am now endeavoring to stimulate my Countrymen to the extension of the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James, thereby, and a short land transportation, to connect the Western Territory by strong commercial bands with this. I hope I shall succeed, more on account of its political importance than the commercial advantages which would result from it, altho' the latter is an immense object: for if this Country, which will settle faster than any other ever did (and chiefly by foreigners who can have no particular predilection for *us*), cannot, by an easy communication be drawn this way, but are suffered to form commercial intercourses (which lead we all know to others) with the Spaniards on their right and rear, or the British on their left, they will become a distinct people from us, have different views, different interests, and instead of adding strength to the Union, may in case of a rupture with either of those powers, be a formidable and dangerous neighbour.

After much time spent (charity directs us to suppose in duly considering the matter) a treaty has at length been held with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix: much to the advantage it is said of the United States, but to the great disgust of that of New York: fruitlessly, it is added by some, who assert that the Deputies on the part of the Indians were not properly authorized to

treat. How true this may be, I will not pretend to decide; but certain it is in my opinion, that there is a kind of fatality attending all our public measures, inconceivable delays, particular States counteracting the plans of the United States when submitted to them, opposing each other upon all occasions, torn by internal disputes, or supinely negligent and inattentive to everything which is not local and selfinteresting and very often short sighted in these, make up our system of conduct. Would to God our own Countrymen, who are entrusted with the management of the political machine, could view things by that large and extensive scale upon which it is measured by foreigners, and by the Statemen of Europe, who see what we might be, and predict what we shall come to. In fact, our federal Government is a name without substance: No State is longer bound by its edicts, than it suits *present* purposes, without looking to the consequences. How then can we fail in a little time, becoming the sport of European politics, and the victims of our own folly.

I met the Marqs. de la Fayette at Richmond, brought him to this place, conducted him to Annapolis, saw him on the road to Baltimore, and returned. About the middle of this month he expected to embark at New York for France. He tells us that Mrs. Knox was about to add to your family, we hope 'ere this we may congratulate you both on a son, or daughter, according to your desires. Mrs. Washington joins me in every good sentiment of esteem, regard and friendship, I am, etc.

P. S. Had you an agreeable tour to the Eastward? Are the State Societies[2] in the New England Governments making any moves towards obtaining Charters? If they are, with what success?[3]

[1] Of the Cincinnati.
[2] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Mount Vernon, December 8, 1784.

Dear Sir: When the Marqs. de la Fayette left this place, he expected to embark abt. the 14th. or 15th. Instt. on board the Nymph frigate, at New York, for France. Therefore, as this event may have taken place before this letter gets that far, I take the liberty of putting the enclosed packet under cover to you, with a request, if he should have Sailed, to forward it by the fiirst French Packet which follows.

In looking into Millers Gardeners Dictionary, I find, besides transplanting, that the Pine-tree and ever greens of all kinds, are to be raised from the Seed. As this may be an easier way of helping me to the balm of Gilead, Spruce, White pine, or Hemlock, than by Stolks, I would thank your Excellency when it may be convenient (if it is not too late in the Season for it) to forward me some of these Seeds; especially the first, extracted from the Cone, and put up in Sand. A thimble ful or two of each would suffice, and this might, at any time, come by the Stage, first to the care of Colo. Biddle in Philadelphia, who would forward it to me. Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for Mrs. Clinton, yourself and all the family. With great truth etc.[4]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, December 8, 1784.

My Dr. Marqs: The peregrination of the day in which I parted with you, ended at Marlbro': the next day, bad as it was, I got home before dinner.[5]

[4] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by John Gilbert, of Philadelphia.

[5] Washington parted from Lafayette at Annapolis, apparently on December 1, and reached Mount Vernon on December 2.

In the moment of our separation upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connexion and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages distended,[6] whether that was the last sight, I ever should have of you? And tho' I wished to say no, my fears answered yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill, I had been 52 years climbing, and that tho' I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the dreary mansions of my father's. These things darkened the shades and gave a gloom to the picture, consequently to my prospects of seeing you again: but I will not repine, I have had my day.

Nothing of importance has occurred since I parted with you; I found my family well, and am now immersed in company; notwithstanding which, I have in haste, produced a few more letters to give you the trouble of, rather inclining to commit them to your care, than to pass them thro' many and unknown hands.

It is unnecessary, I persuade myself to repeat to you my Dr. Marqs. the sincerity of my regards and friendship, nor have I words which could express my affection for you, were I to attempt it. My fervent prayers are offered for your safe and pleasant passage, happing meeting with Madame la Fayette and family, and the completion of every wish of your heart, in all which Mrs. Washington joins me, as she does in complimts. to Capt. Grandchean and the Chevr.[7] of whom little Wash:n often speaks. With every sentimt. wch. is propitious and endearing, I am, etc.[8]

[6] A questionable error of the copyist; "distanced" seems more likely to have been the word written by Washington.

[7] Chevalier Caraman.

[8] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To GEORGE PLATER, CHARLES CARROLL, JOHN CADWALADER, AND SAMUEL CHASE

Mount Vernon, December 11, 1784.

Sir: The Gentn. who will have the honor of presenting this letter to you is a Nephew[9] of mine; heir to a Brother who was one of the Principio Company, and to whose Will I was appointed an Exr., the Circumstances put it out of my power to qualify. He is about to offer a petition to your honble. Assembly for his part of the Sales of the property of that Company. The petition is explanatory of the justice on which it is founded, and so full that it leaves nothing for me to add; further, than as it was by a mis-information, or mis-conception that his proportion of the Bonds got into the hands of the Intendant, so I am perswaded it only requires to be known, to obtain an order for the assignment of them to him, as the Act of your Assembly reserved his interest therein absolutely and clearly; and only a punctilio of the Intendant the cause of the delay; which, for the reasons assigned in the petition, is exceedingly injurious to my Nephew. You will excuse me I hope, for the freedom of this address; and do me the justice to believe that I am, etc.[10]

To GEORGE MASON

December 13, 1784.

Dr. Sir: My brother John[11] is much in want of four, five or six hundred pounds which he is desirous of borrowing on Interest. If it is in your power to supply him I will become security for

[9] William Augustine Washington, son of Augustine ("Austin"), of Westmoreland, and a half-nephew

[10] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

[11] John Augustine Washington.

the fulfilment of his agreement. He seems to have little expectation that money in these times, can be had at the common interest; and his own words will best express what he is willing to allow.

I believe I mentioned to you before (when he was last up) that I was willing to receive ninety pounds for an hundred, and pay interest for the latter sum from the date, provided I could be allowed to retain the principal two years. If I could receive 4, 5, or 6 hundred pounds on these terms, it would be a real convenience and happiness for me; because it would enable me to observe that punctuality in dealing I always wished to do, and without which I am miserable. If you cou'd prevail upon Colo. Mason, or any other Gentleman to furnish me with the above sum on these terms, you would confer a very great favor, and I would attend at a time to be appointed to give Bond and receive the money.

To this, I can add nothing but my wishes for his success, an expression of my own inclination to have supplied his want, if I had been in circumstances to have it done. I am, etc.[12]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS[13]

Mount Vernon, December 14, 1784.

Dear Sir: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 20th. of last month, only came to my hands by the post preceding the date of this. For the copy of the treaty held with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix, you will please to accept my thanks. These people have given I think, all that the United States could reasonably have required of them; more perhaps than the State of New York conceives ought to have been asked from them by any other than their own Legislature. I wish they were better satisfied. Individual States opposing the measures of the United States, encroaching upon the territory of

[12] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[13] Richard Henry Lee.

each other; and setting up old and obsolete claims, is verifying the prediction of our enemies, and is truly unfortunate. If the Western tribes are as well disposed to treat with us as the Six Nations have been; and will cede a competent District of Land No. West of the Ohio to answer our present purposes; it will be a circumstance as unexpected; as pleasing to me; for it was apprehended that they would agree to the latter reluctantly, if at all: but the example of the northern Indians who (if they have not reliquished their claim) have pretentions to a large part of those Lands; may have a powerful influence on the Western gentry, and smooth the way for the Commissioners who have proceeded to Cayahoga.

It gave me pleasure to find by the last Gazettes, that a sufficient number of States had assembled to form a Congress, and that you were chosen to preside in it,[14] on this event be pleased to accept my compliments of congratulation. To whatever causes the delay of this meeting may have been ascribed,[15] it most certainly has an unfavourable aspect; contributes to lessen (at present too low) the dignity and importance of the federal government, and is hurtful to our national character in the eyes of Europe.

It is said (I do not know how founded) that our Assembly have repealed their former act respecting British debts. If this be true, and the State of New York has not acted repugnant to the terms of the Treaty, the British Government can no longer hold the western Posts under that cover; but I shall be mistaken if they do not entrench themselves behind some other expedient to effect it; or will appoint a time for surrendering them of which we cannot avail ourselves; the probable consequence of which will be the destruction of the works.

[14] Lee was elected President of Congress on November 30.

[15] Congress was to have assembled October 30, but did not succeed in organizing until November 30.

The Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have now under consideration the extension of the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James, and opening a communication between them and the Western waters: they seem fully impressed with the political as well as the commercial advantages which would result from the accomplishment of these great objects; and I hope will embrace the present moment to put them in train for speedy execution. Would it not at the same time be worthy of the wisdom and attention of Congress, to have the western waters well explored, the navigation of them fully ascertained, accurately laid down, and a complete and perfect map made of the Country; at least, as far westwardly as the Miamies running into the Ohio and Lake Erie; and to see how the waters of them communicate with the river St. Joseph which empties into the Lake Michigan, and with the Wabash? I cannot forbear observing here, that the Miami Village in Hutchins map, if it, and the waters here mentioned are laid down with any degree of accuracy, points to a very important post for the Union. The expence attending this undertaking cou'd not be great, the advantages would be unbounded; for sure I am, nature has made such an ample display of her bounties in those regions, that the more the Country is explored, the more it will rise in estimation, consequently, the greater might the revenue be to the Union. Would there be any impropriety do you think sir, in reserving for special sale, all Mines, minerals and Salt springs in the general Grants of Land belonging to the United States. The Public, instead of the few knowing ones, might in this case derive the benefits which would result from the sale of them, without infringing any rule of justice that occurs to me, or their own laws, but on the contrary inflict a just punishment upon those, who in defiance of the latter, have dared to create enemies, and to disturb the public

tranquillity, by roaming over the country, marking and surveying the valuable spots in it, to the great disquiet of the Western Tribes of Indians, who have viewed these transactions with jealous indignation. To hit upon a happy medium price for the Western Lands, for the prevention of monopoly on one hand; and not discouraging useful settlers on the other, will no doubt require consideration, but should not employ too much time before it is announced. The spirit for emigration is great, people have got impatient, and tho' you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while and you will not be able to do either. It is easier to prevent, than to remedy an evil. I shall be happy in the continuation of your correspondence, and with every sentiment of great esteem etc.[16]

To RICHARD CLAIBORNE

Mount Vernon, December 15, 1784.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 17th. ulto. It would interfere with no views of mine, to give you a field to speculate in, if I was sufficiently Master of the business, and had leisure for these kind of communications: but the truth is, I do not turn my thoughts to matters of that sort, and if I did, the business in which you want to be informed is too much in embryo, and depends too much on contingencies, to speak to with any degree of certainty at this time. First, because Acts of the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, must be obtained to incorporate private Adventurers to undertake the business. 2d. the Company must be formed before anything can be done. 3d. an actual survey of the waters, by skilful Engineers, (or persons in that line) must take place and be approved before the points at which the navigation on the different waters can be ascer-

[16] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

tained, as proper to end, or commence the water transportation. From Fort Cumberland to the Yohioghany is one of the Portages in contemplation, and from some place higher up the No. river,[17] most convenient to the navigable part, or such part as can be made so, of the Cheat river, is another portage talked of; but whether either, neither or both may be attempted does not lie with me to determine, and therefore I should be unwilling to mislead any one by hazarding an opinion, as my knowledge of that Country goes more to the general view of it, and to general principle, than to the investigation of local spots for interested purposes. I am, etc.[18]

To GEORGE CHAPMAN[19]

Mount Vernon, December 15, 1784.

Sir: Not until within a few days have I been honor'd with your favor of the 27th. of Septr. 1783, accompanying your treatise on Education.

My sentiments are perfectly in unison with yours sir, that the best means of forming a manly, virtuous and happy people, will be found in the right education of youth. Without *this* foundation, every other means, in my opinion, must fail; and it gives me pleasure to find that Gentlemen of your abilities are devoting their time and attention in pointing out the way. For your lucubrations on this subject which you have been so obliging as to send me, I pray you to accept my thanks, and an expression of the pleasure I felt at the declaration of your intention to devote a further portion of your time in so useful a study.

Of the importance of education our Assemblies, happily, seem fully impressed; they establishing new, and giving further

[17] The North Branch of the Potomac.

[18] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[19] Formerly master of the grammar school at Dumfries, Va., and at this time master of the academy at Inchdrewer, near Banff, North Britain.

endowments to the old Seminaries of learning, and I persuade myself will leave nothing unessayed to cultivate literature and useful knowledge, for the purpose of qualifying the rising generation for patrons of good government, virtue and happiness. I have the honor, etc.[20]

To THOMAS BLACKBURN

Mount Vernon, December 19, 1784.

Dr. Sir: The Express who brought me the resolves of our Assembly, and is going to Annapolis with dispatches for Govr. Paca, informs me that he deliver'd others to you. It only remains therefore for me to add, that Thursday next, the 23d. is the day appointed for the Commissioners to meet at Annapolis.[21] I shall go to our Court tomorrow, and proceed from thence.[22] I am, etc.[20]

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1784.

Dear Sir: I am indebted to you for several letters, and am as much so for the Fish you kindly intended, as if it had actually arrived, and I was in the act of paying my respects to it at table, the chance, however, of doing this would be greater, was it at Boston, than in Yorktown in this State, where I am informed it was landed at the time the Marqs. de la Fayette did, who proceeded from thence to Richmond, where I met him, and conducted him to Annapolis on his way to New York; the place of his intended embarkation for France, about the middle of this month.

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[20] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[21] Blackburn became ill and did not attend.

[22] On December 19 Washington also wrote a brief note to Governor Paca, notifying him that he would be in Annapolis at the time appointed. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

I am glad to hear that my old acquaintance Colo. Ward[23] is yet under the influence of vigorous passions. I will not ascribe the intrepidity of his late enterprize to a mere *flash* of desires, because, in his military career he would have learnt how to distinguish between false alarms and a serious movement. Charity therefore induces me to suppose that like a prudent general, he had reviewed his *strength,* his arms, and ammunition before he got involved in an action. But if these have been neglected, and he has been precipitated into the measure, let me advise him to make the *first* onset upon his fair del Toboso, with vigor, that the impression may be deep, if it cannot be lasting, or frequently renewed.

We are all well at this time except Miss Custis, who still feels the effect, and sometimes the return of her fever. Mrs. Lund Washington has added a daughter to her family. She, Child and husband are well, and become house-keepers at the distance of about four miles from this place.

We have a dearth of News, but the fine weather keeps us busy, and we have leisure for cogitation. All join in best wishes for you, Doctr. and Mrs. Stuart are of those who do it. I am, etc.[24]

*To LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR BEVERLEY RANDOLPH

Alexandria, December 20, 1784.

Sir: The letter you did me the honor to write to me the 15th Inst. was not delivered until late yesterday Evening. I filled the Blank in the letter to Govr. Paca and forwarded it; and am now on my way to Annapolis. I named the 22d., which at the rate your Express travels, is as soon as the Govr. can lay your letter

[23] Col. Joseph(?) Ward.
[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

before the Assembly of Maryland and Commns. be appointed to meet those from this State. Genl. Gates will attend; and I have given Colo. Blackburne notice of the time and place.

As soon as the business of the meeting is finished a report shall be made. I have the honr. etc.[25]

To MELANCTON SMITH

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1784.

Sir: Your letter of the 27th. of October came to my hands the 14th. inst:, the box of Plate is not yet arrived.

It would have been very obliging in you, and would have done me an essential kindness, had you as soon as this Box arrived at New York (which you say was the latter part of summer) given me notice thereof by post; altho' there might have been no opportunity at that time, or in any short time thereafter to forward the package to me: for having been assured by Mr. Parker (before I left New York last year) that I might look for this Plate in the Spring; having, in answer to a letter I wrote to him early in the summer, been informed of some disappointment to his expectation of it; and having heard soon after, that that Gentlen. was under peculiar embarrassment, and not a word from him since, I gave up every idea of having my commission complied with by him, and supplied myself, not fourteen days ago, in another way. I now have both setts, neither of which can be disposed of, one having been used, and the other having my Crest and arms on it.

When I was at New York, altho' I could not get Mr. Parker, from his then hurry, to render me a full and complete transcript of my Accots.; yet he gave me a short statement of the debit and credit of my dealings with him by which there is a

[25] From a photostat of the draft in the Chicago University Library.

balance of £65.5.5 York Curry. due to me, this sum I left in his hands declaredly and by agreement to be applied towards payment for the Plate his brother was to get for me. If you will be pleased (if Mr. Parkers books are in your possession) to examine into this matter, or if they are not, will make out an account with this credit, at the current exchange, I will cause it to be paid. To do it in Alexandria, if you have any Agent or correspondent there, would be more convenient for me, as I have no dealings either in New York or London at this time. In this case I shou'd be glad to have the original Bill sent with the Accot. If the business cannot be closed in this manner I will endeavour to accomodate myself to your wishes in any other way I am able. I am, etc.[26]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Annapolis, December 23, 1784.

My Dr. Marqs. You would scarcely expect to receive a letter from me at this place: a few hours before I set out for it, I as little expected to cross the Potomac again this winter, or even to be fifteen miles from home before the first of April, as I did to make you a visit in an air Balloon in France.

I am here however, with Genl. Gates, at the request of the Assembly of Virginia, to fix matters with the Assembly of this State respecting the extension of the inland navigation of Potomac, and the communication between it and the Western waters; and hope a plan will be agreed upon to the mutual satisfaction of both States, and to the advantage of the Union at large.

It gave me pain to hear that the Frigate la Nymph, grounded in her passage to New York, we have various accots. of this

[26] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

unlucky accident, but I hope she has received no damage, and that your embarkation is not delay'd by it.

The enclosed came to my hands under cover of the letter which accompanies it, and which is explanatory of the delay it has met with. I can only repeat to you assurances of my best wishes for an agreeable passage and happy meeting with Madame la Fayette and your family, and of the sincere attachment and affection with which, I am, etc.

PS. You and your heirs, Male, are made Citizens of this State[27] by an Act of Assembly. You will have an official Accot. of it, this is by the by.[28]

*To JAMES MADISON

Annapolis, December 28, 1784.

Dear Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 11th.

The proceedings of the conference, and the Act and resolutions of this Legislature consequent thereupon (herewith transmitted to the Assembly) are so full, and explanatory of the motives which governed in this business, that it is scarcely necessary for me to say any thing in addition to them; except that, this State seem highly impressed with the importance of the objects wch. we have had under consideration, and are very desirous of seeing them accomplished.

We have reduced most of the Tolls from what they were in the first Bill, and have added something to a few others. upon the whole, we have made them as low as we conceived from the best information before us, and such estimates as we had means to calculate upon, as they can be fixed, without

[27] Maryland and also Virginia made Lafayette a citizen.

[28] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On December 23 Washington wrote a brief letter to Baron Montesquieu, Marquis de la Brède, aide to Chevalier de Chastellux, introducing John Ridout, of Annapolis. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

hazarding the plan altogether. We made the value of the commodity the governing principle in the establishment of the Tolls; but having had an eye to some bulky articles of produce, and to the encouragement of the growth and Manufacture of some others, as well as to prevent a tedious enumeration of the different species of all, we departed from the genl. rule in many instances.

The rates of tollage as now fixed, may still appear high to some of the Southern Gentlemen, when they compare them with those on James River; but as there is no comparison in the expence and risk of the two undertakings, so neither ought thereto be in the Tolls, I am fully perswaded that the Gentlemen who were appointed, and have had this matter under consideration, were actuated by no other motives than to hit (if they could do so) upon such a happy medium as would not be burthensome to indivs. or give jealousy to the public on one hand, nor discouragement to adventures on the other. To secure success, and to give vigor to the undertaking, it was judged advisable for each State to contribute (upon the terms of private Subscribers) to the expence of it; especially as it might have a happy influence on the minds of the Western Settlers and it may be observed here, that only part of this money can be called for immediately, provided the work goes on; and afterwards, only in the proportion of its progression.

Though there is no obligation upon the State to adopt this (if it is inconvenient, or repugnant to their wishes) yet I should be highly pleased to hear that they had done so, (our advantages will, most assuredly, be equal to those of Maryland and our public spirit ought not, in my opinion, to be less); as also the resolutions respecting the roads of Communication; both of which, tho they look in some degree to different objects, are both very important; that by the Yohiogany (thro' Pensylvania)

is particularly so for the Fur and Peltry of the Lakes, because it is the most direct rout by which they can be transported; whilst it is exceedingly convenient to the people who inhabit the Ohio (or Alligany) above Fort Pitt; the lower part of the Monogahela; and all the Yohiogany.

Matters might perhaps have been better digested if more time had been taken, but the fear of not getting the report to Richmond before the Assembly would have risen, occasioned more hurry than accuracy; or even real dispatch. But to alter the Act now, further than to accommodate it to circumstances where it is essential; or to remedy an obvious error if any should be discovered will not do. The Bill passed this Assembly with only 9 dissenting voices; and got thro' both Houses in a day, so earnest were the members of getting it to you in time.

It is now near 12 at Night, and I am writing with an Aching head, having been constantly employed in this business since the 22d. without assistance from my Colleagues; Genl. Gates having been Sick the whole time, and Colo. Blackburn not attending. But for this I would be more explicit. I am etc.

I am ashamed to send such a letter, but cannot give you a fairer one.[29]

*To THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Annapolis, December 28, 1784.

Pursuant to the Resolves of the Honble. the Senate and Ho. of Delegates, and conformably to the direction of the Executive authority of the State of Virginia, we repaired to the City of Annapolis, and held a conference with the Gentlemen appointed

[29] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by George A. Ball, of Muncie, Ind.

by the Legislature of Maryland; the result of which is contained in the Inclosure No. 1.[30]

In consequence of the opinion given by the Conference the Legislature of Maryland have passed the Act inclosed, No. 2. and the Resolves No. 3.

It may be necessary for us to explain the reason for the provision in the Act. "that if Subscriptions should be taken in; or a meeting of Subscribers directed by the Legislature of Virginia at different times, different from those in the Act, then there should be a meeting at the time appointed by Virginia; and subscriptions made at times by them appointed, should be received". It was thought by the Conferrees to be most proper to appoint certain times in the Act, but as it was doubtful whether the Act would get to Virginia in time to be adopted at the present Session of the Assembly, it was judged necessary to make a provision to accomodate the Scheme to an Act to be passed by Virginia, or the next Session of their assembly, without the necessity of having recourse again to the Legislature of Maryland. but it is the opinion of the Conferrees that an Act upon Similar principles to that passed by Maryland might, if possible be passed by the Assembly of Virginia at this Session; this would give Speedy beginning to the Work, and an oppertunity of embracing the present favorable state of things for accomplishing the views of the two States.

The Act appears to us, from every consideration we can give it, to be founded on just and proper principles, and to be calculated to answer in every respect the purposes for which it is designed; we conceive it a duty therefore to declare that it meets our entire approbation.

[30] The inclosures are not now found in the *Washington Papers*. The report of the proceedings of the Commissioners (inclosure no. 1) is printed in Corra Bacon-Foster's *Potomac Route to the West*, p. 45.

The reasons why this Act has not the Signature of the chief magistrate are, because he is not present, and because it wants not this formality to give it validity.

We should do injustice to our feelings were we not to add that we have been happy in meeting Gentlemen of liberallity and candour, impressed with the importance of accelerating the purpose of the Legislature of Virginia of opening a free and easy intercourse with the Western territory, and for the extension of inland Navigation; and, that, there has been a perfect accordance of Sentiment in the Legislature of the State.

Respectfully submitted by Go: WASHINGTON and HORATIO Gates.[31] [C. L.]

To REVEREND JEREMY BELKNAP

Mount Vernon, January 5, 1785.[32]

Revd. Sir: A few days ago, under cover from Mr. Hazard of Philada., I was honored with your favor of the 19th. of July, and the first volume of your history of New Hampshire. For both I pray you to accept my thanks: but my acknowledgements are more particularly due for your favourable expression, in the former, of my past endeavors to support the cause of liberty. The proof you have given of your approbation of this, is interesting. I receive it with gratitude, and am with great respect, Revd. Sir, etc.[33]

[31] Washington signed for Gates.

In 1784, or an approximate date, Washington drew up a tabular statement of "A List of the United States Loan Office certificates, in possession of, and belonging to George Washington. Payable in Virginia" and also of those payable in Maryland and "at the United States Office." This showed holdings amounting, both principal and interest, to $28,930, which, in specie value, at the depreciation rate, amounted to $8,002.92. A photostat of this, in the *Washington Papers*, was kindly furnished by Alfred C. Chapin, of New York City.

[32] In the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*, this date is wrongly copied as 1784.

[33] Washington forwarded this letter in care of Ebenezer Hazard, to whom he wrote a brief, explanatory note, Jan. 5, 1785. This note is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

*To THE SECRETARY AT WAR

Mount Vernon, January 5, 1785.

My dear Sir: About the beginning of last month I wrote you a pretty long letter, and soon after, received your favor of the 23d. of November. It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or adds ought to my perplexity. I receive them with pleasure, and pay as much attention to them as my avocations will admit.

It is references of old matters with which I have nothing to do. Applications, which oftentimes cannot be complied with. Enquiries, which would employ the pen of a historian to satisfy. Letters of compliment, as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to. And the commonplace business, which employs my pen and my time; often disagreeably.

Indeed, these with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, may be productive of disagreeable consequences. I already begin to feel the effect. Heavy, and painful oppressions of the head, and other disagreeable sensations, often trouble me. I am determined therefore to employ some person who shall ease me of the drudgery of this business. At *any rate,* if the whole of it is thereby suspended, I am resolved to use exercise. My private concerns also, require infinitely more attention than I have given, or can give, under present circumstances. They can no longer be neglected without involving my ruin. This, my dear Sir, is a friendly communication; I give it in testimony of my unreservedness with you, and not for the purpose of discouraging your letters; for be assured that, to corrispond with those I love is among my highest gratifications, and I perswade myself you will not doubt my sincerity when I assure you, I place you among the foremost of

this class. Letters of friendship require no study, the communications are easy, and allowances are expected, and made. This is not the case with those which require re-searches, consideration, recollection, and the de—l knows what to prevent error, and to answer the ends for which they are written.

In my last I informed you that I was endeavouring to stimulate my Countrymen to the extension of the inland Navigation of our rivers; and to the opening of the best and easiest communication for Land transportation between them and the western waters. I am just returned from Annapolis to which place I was requested to go by our Assembly (with my bosom friend Genl. G—tes, who being at Richmond contrived to edge himself into the Commission) for the purpose of arranging matters, and forming a Law which should be similar in both States, so far as it respected the river Potomack, which seperates them. I met the most perfect accordance in that legislature; and the matter is now reported to ours, for its concurrence. The two Assemblies (not being in Circumstances to undertake this business *wholly* at the public expence) propose to incorporate such private Adventurers as shall associate for the purpose of extending the navigation of the River from the tide water as far up as it will admit Craft of ten Tons burthen, and to allow them a perpetual toll and other emoluments to induce them to subscribe freely to a Work of such magnitude; whilst they have agreed (or, I should rather say, probably will agree, as the matter is not yet concluded in the Virginia Assembly) to open, at the public expence, the communication with the Western territory. To do this will be a great political work. May be immensely extensive in a commercial point, and beyond all question, will be exceedingly beneficial for those who advance the money for the purpose of extending the Navigation of the river, as the tolls arising therefrom are to be held in perpetuity, and will encrease every year.

Rents have got to such an amazing height in Alexandria, that (having an unimproved lot or two there) I have thoughts, if my finances will support me in the measure, of building a House, or Houses thereon for the purpose of letting.

In humble imitation of the wise man, I have set me down to count the cost; and among other heavy articles of expenditure, I find lime is not the smallest.

Stone lime with us, owing to the length of (Land) transportation comes very high at that place. Shell lime, from its weakness, and the consequent quantity used, is far from being low. These considerations added to a report that this article may be had from your State by way of Ballast, upon terms much easier than either can be bought here, inclines me without making an apology, to give you the trouble of enquiring from those who might be disposed to enter into a contract therefor, and can ascertain the fact with precision,

1st. At what price by the Bushel, a quantity of slaked stone lime could be delivered at one of the Wharves at Alexandria (freight and every incidental charge included), or to a Lighter opposite to my own House.

2d. At what price burnt lime stone, but unslaked (if it be safe to bring such) could be delivered as above.

3d. At what price unburnt lime stone, could be delivered at the latter place.

In the last case, it might I should suppose, come as Ballast very low. In the Second, it might also come as Ballast, and (tho' higher than the former, yet) comparatively, cheap, if the danger of waters getting to it, and its slaking and heating in the Hold, would not be too great. In the first case, there would be no certainty of its goodness, because lime from the late judicious experiments of a Mr. Higgens, should be used as soon as it is slaked; and would be still better, if it was so, immediately after burning; as Air as well as water, according to his

observations, weakens and injures it. Your information upon these points from those who might incline to Contract, and on whom dependance could be placed, would much oblige me; and the sooner I get it the better, as my determination is suspended.

Our amiable young friend the Marquis de la Fayette could not be otherwise than well pleased with his reception in America. Every testimony of respect, affection and gratitude has been shewn him, wherever he went; if his heart therefore has not been impressed with these expressions (which I am far from supposing) the political consequence which he will derive from them must bear them in his remembrance, and point to the advantages wch. must flow.

You informed me that Mrs. Knox had got another, but left me to guess, boy or girl. On the birth of either Mrs. Washington and I sincerely congratulate you both; and offer our best wishes for you all. hoping the good health which Mrs. Knox and the Children enjoyed at the time your letter was written, may be of long continuance. The report of my coming to Boston was without foundation; I do not, at this time, know when, or whether ever, I may have it in my power to do this, altho' to see my compatriots in War, would be great gratification to my mind. With every sentiment of esteem etc.

[MS. H. S.]

To SAMUEL CHASE

Mount Vernon, January 5, 1785.

Dear Sir: Receive my thanks for your favor of 31st. ulto., and for the copies therewith enclosed: they will answer my purposes equally with the fairest that could be made.

When I found your Express at Mount Pleasant, and was unable to procure another in Marlbro', I commenced one myself,

got home before dinner, and dispatched one of my servants to Hooes ferry immediately. He placed the packet into the hands of the Express there waiting, before nine o'clock next morning: on Friday with ease the business might have been laid before the Assembly of this State, yet sitting I believe. When I hear from thence, I will with pleasure communicate the result.

The attention which your assembly is giving to the establishment of public schools, for the encouragement of literature, does them great honor: to accomplish this, ought to be one of our first endeavours; I know of no object more interesting. We want something to expand the mind, and make us think with more liberallity, and act with sounder policy, than most of the States do. We should consider that we are not now in leading strings. It behooves us therefore to look well to our ways. My best wishes attend the Ladies of your family. I am, etc.[34]

*To GEORGE AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, January 6, 1785.

Dear George: As Soon as I got your letter announcing your intention of spending the Winter at Charleston I wrote you by Post, under cover to Colo. Willm. Washington, and sometime after by Mr. Laurens, by whom also I forwarded the articles of clothing you desired might be sent to you; there can be little doubt (as the Post now goes regularly) of both getting to hand. I need not therefore repeat any part of the contents of those Letters. I had the pleasure to hear yesterday from Colo. Parker of Norfolk, that you had left the Island of Bermuda with encreased health. I flatter myself the mildness of a Southern Winter will perfectly restore you in addition to this, a trip in

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the Packet to Philadelphia when you determine to return to Virginia, may be of Service; this, at a proper Season wd. be I conceive the easiest, cheapest, and best method of getting back as the Stage from Philadelphia comes to Alexandria twice a week regularly. You would by this means avoid the dreary roads, and bad accomodation, which is to be encountered I am told, all through North Carolina.

Since my last Colo. Bassett has been here and brought up Fanny, who is now with us. She has been unwell all the Fall, as most others in this Country have been; she is not yet recovered, but the change of Air and exercise will soon give her health.

We have nothing new in this Quarter, our Assembly has been sitting since the middle, or last of October; but we have little information of what they have done. A plan is now on foot for improving and extending the Navigation of this River by private Subscription and opening a good road between it and the nearest Western Waters. I hope it will succeed; as the Assemblies of this State and Maryld. seem disposed to give it their Countenance.

If it is not too late in the Season to obtain them, I wish you would procure for me in So. Carolina a few of the Acorns of the live Oak, and the Seeds of the Evergreen Magnolia; this latter is called in Millers Gardeners dictionary greater Magnolia, it rises according to his Acct. to the height of Eighty feet or more, flowers early, and is a beautiful tree; there is another Species of the Magnolia of which I wish to get the Seeds, it is called the Umbrella tree; but unless these Seeds grow in cones and the Cones are now on the Trees there is no chance of obtaining them at this Season; in which case prevail on Colo. Washington, or some acquaintance on whom you can depend, to supply me next Seed time.

The Acorns and Seeds of every kind should be put in dry Sand as soon as they are gathered: and the box which contains them might (if no oppertunity offers to Alexandria) be sent either to Mr. Newton of Norfolk or to Colo. Biddle of Philadelphia, with a request to forward it safely and by the first oppertunity.

If there are any other trees (not natives with us) which, would be ornamental in a grove or forest and would stand our climate, I should be glad to procure the Seeds of them in the way above mentioned. All here unite in best wishes for you; and Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to Colo. Washington and Lady, and other friends of our Acquainte.

With great esteem etc.

PS. Your Father and family were well some little time ago, and I have heard nothing to the contrary Since.[35]

To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON

January 10, 1785.

Sir: Immediately after my return from Annapolis, I wrote to some Gentlemen of my acquaintance in the Assembly of this State, suggesting the expediency of a conference between Delegates of their Body and yours, on the extension of the inland navigation of the river Potomac, and its communication with the Western waters. When I receive an answer, I will communicate the contents of it to you. I am, etc.

P. S. Are you likely Sir, to ascertain soon, to whom I am to pay the balance which is due for the land I bought of the deceas'd Mr. Clifton[36] under the decree of our high Court of Chancery?[37]

[35] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

[36] William Clifton.

[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN FILSON

Mount Vernon, January 15, 1785.

Sir: I have been favored with two letters from you:[38] that which was first written came last to hand, and neither of them long since. Your history and map of Kentucke I have not yet seen. For the honor you have done me in the dedication of them, you will please to accept my acknowledgments; and for the favourable sentiments you have been so polite as to express for me in both your letters, you have my thanks.

It has long been my wish to see an extensive and accurate map of the Western Territory set on foot, and amply encouraged: but I would have this work founded upon actual surveys and careful observations, any thing short of these is, in my opinion, not only defective and of little use, but serve as often to mislead as to direct the examiner. My sentiments upon this subject are well known to many members of Congress, and to the Legislature of the State in which I have the honor to live: but what steps will be taken by both, or either, to accomplish this useful undertaking, is not for me to say.

Altho' I possess a pretty general knowledge of the Ohio and its waters between Fort Pitt and the Gt. Kanhawa, and have some parts of that Country laid down from actual surveys; yet they are not so connected, nor founded with such precision as to incline me to suffer my name to be given as the author of them, or any information in a map or topographical description of the Country, that would not stand the test of future examination.

That the river Potomac communicates by short portages (which may be improved to great advantage) with the Yoho-

[38] Of Nov. 30, 1784, and Dec. 4, 1784, both of which are in the *Washington Papers*.

ghaney and Cheat rivers, (branches of the Monongahela) for the countries East and West of the Apalachian mountains, as James river also does with the waters of the Great Kanhawa, none can deny: and that these will be the channels thro' which the trade of the Western Country will principally come, I have no more doubt of *myself,* than the States of Virga. and Maryland had, when within these few days, they passed Laws for the purpose of extending and improving the navigation of those rivers, and opening roads of communication between them and the western waters.

Whenever business or inclination may bring you to this part of the Country, it would give me pleasure to see you. I am, etc.[39]

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Mount Vernon, January 17, 1785.

Dear Sir: Yesterday, and not before, I received authentic information, that the Assembly of this State had passed a similar Act and resolutions with those of your Legislature, and have fixed upon the 8th. of Feby. to open Books for the purpose of receiving subscriptions in the City of Richmond and Towns of Alexandria and Winchester: which Books are to be kept open until the 10th. day of May following. They have granted equal sums towards the navigation and roads, with your Assembly. I have pleasure in giving you this information, nothing remains now but to act with dispatch and vigor.

I presume official notice of the passing of this act, and attendant resolutions, will be made by the Executive of this State to your Governor, but lest thro' the hurry of business it may be delayed, I will take care that he shall have advice of it, as soon as copies can be taken; that if promulgation is necessary, and

[39] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

he thinks proper to act upon private information, it may not be wanted.

Our Assembly have passed a similar Law for the purpose of opening and improving the navigation of James river and a communication between it, and the nearest Western waters. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.[40]

To SAMUEL CHASE

Mount Vernon, January 17, 1785.

Dear Sir: The irregularity of the post, occasioned by the frost, prevented my hearing with *certainty* what the Assembly of this State had done with the Potomac Bill, until yesterday. I have now the pleasure to inform you that they have adopted the one which passed your Legislature, and come to similar resolutions respecting the road of communication with the river Cheat, and the application to the State of Pennsylvania for another to Yohioghaney. They have also passed a similar act for improving and extending the navigation of James river.

As you expressed a desire to know what the Assembly of this State had done, or were about to do respecting an establishment for the teachers of religion, I do myself the honor to enclose you a copy of their proceedings in that matter; and am, etc.[40]

To JOHN FITZGERALD AND WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, January 18, 1785.

Gentln. At my return from Alexandria yesterday afternoon, I found the letters and papers herewith enclosed.[41] I sent the whole, as well private as public, the former for your satisfaction, the latter for you to act upon.

[40] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[41] The papers sent with this letter are listed in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

As these, with the Maryland act and resolutions which I left in the hands of Mr. Lee[42] for the purpose of communicating them to the Gentn. in town (well wishers to the inland navigation of the river &c.) contain all the information on the subject, I could give, I beg leave to refer you to them.

All the papers, except the Virginia Act, which are necessary for Mr. Richards[43] to strike printed copies from, I should be glad to have returned to me in the course of two or three days, as I shall have letters to write, and other matters to do, in consequence thereof. It should be intimated to the printer that the Bill is an original paper, and spared indulgently from the Clerks office: great care therefore should be taken that no scratches or blots are suffered to be made thereon. The number of copies to be struck will depend upon you Gentleman, the time for promulgation, and obtaining subscriptions is short, the former therefore should be as extensive and diffusive as the nature of the case will admit. With what materials the Managers at the City of Richmond and town of Winchester are to commence their operations, does not seem very clear; it rests with you therefore I conceive, to put things in motion, at least by opening a correspondence with the Gentlemen at these places, fixing a plan. It appears to me also, that a notification of the passing of this act and consequent resolutions should go immediately to the Executive of Maryland, from some quarter; otherwise that State may take umbrage, and think advantage on the score of subscriptions, is meant to be taken of her Citizens. From our Governor, such intimation *ought,* in my opinion, to be given; but it does not appear by anything before us, that it either has been, or is intended to be done. Therefore as

[42] Charles Lee. He acted as clerk of the Alexandria meeting at which the Potomac Company was organized.

[43] George Richard. He was publisher of *The Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser,* Alexandria, Va.

the Acts and resolutions of both Assemblies are now with you, if you will cause a comparative view to be taken of them, and note the alterations, that I may write with exactitude, I will communicate the matter to Govr. Paca, lest there should be neglect or delay on the part of our Executive, or if you will do it, it may answer the same purpose.

How far Mr. Maddison might have intended the paper No. 3[44] for the public eye, I know not; I would have no copies therefore taken of it, as communication of its contents might come better from those who are to act under it. I have the honor, etc.

P. S. If a printed Copy of the Virginia Act could be soon obtained, I would enclose one of them to the Governor of Maryland, and a copy of the corrispondent resolutions of this State to that of Maryland; which would be the fullest and best information he cou'd receive unofficially.[45]

To BENJAMIN HARRISON[46]

Mount Vernon, January 22, 1785.

My dear Sir: It is not easy for me to decide by which my mind was most affected upon the receipt of your letter of the 6th. inst., surprise or gratitude: both were greater than I have words to express. The attention and good wishes which the Assembly have evidenced by their act for vesting in me 150 shares in the navigation of each of the rivers Potomac and James, are more than mere compliment; there is an unequivocal and substantial meaning annexed. But believe me sir, notwithstanding these, no circumstance has happened to me since I left the walks of public life, which has so much embarrassed me. On the one hand, I consider this act, as I have already

[44] A paper by Madison "Respecting the Jurisdiction &c of Potomac."
[45] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[46] Speaker of the House of Delegates, Virginia.

observed, as a noble and unequivocal proof of the good opinion, the affection, and disposition of my Country to serve me; and I should be hurt, if by declining the acceptance of it, my refusal should be construed into disrespect, or the smallest slight upon the generous intention of the country: or, that an ostentatious display of disinterestedness or public virtue, was the source of the refusal. On the other hand, it is really my wish to have my mind, and my actions which are the result of contemplation, as free and independent as the air, that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me, under the fullest conviction, that altho' my judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. Not content then with the bare consciousness of my having, in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure; I would wish that every individual who may hear that it was a favorite plan of mine, may know also that I had no other motive for promoting it, than the advantage I conceived it would be productive of to the Union, and to this State in particular, by cementing the Eastern and Western Territory together, at the same time that it will give vigor and encrease to our commerce, and be a convenience to our Citizens.

How would this matter be viewed then by the eye of the world; and what would be the opinion of it, when it comes to be related that G W——n exerted himself to effect this work, and G. W—— has received 20,000 Dollars, and £5,000 Sterling of the public money as an interest therein? Would not this in the estimation of it (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have acted; and without it there is no foundation for the act) deprive me of the principal thing which is laudable in my

conduct? Would it not, in some respects, be considered in the same light as a pension? And would not the apprehension of this make me more reluctantly offer my sentiments in future? In a word, under what ever pretence, and however customary these gratuitous gifts are made in other Countries, should I not thence forward be considered as a dependant? One moments thought of which would give me more pain, than I should receive pleasure from the product of all the tolls, was every farthing of them vested in me: altho' I consider it as one of the most certain and increasing Estates in the Country.

I have written to you with an openness becoming our friendship. I could have said more on the subject; but I have already said enough to let you into the State of my mind. I wish to know whether the ideas I entertain occurred to, and were expressed by any member in or out of the House. Upon the whole, you may be assured my Dr. Sir, that my mind is not a little agitated. I want the best information and advice to settle it. I have no inclination (as I have already observed) to avail myself of the generosity of the Country: nor do I want to appear ostentatiously disinterested (for more than probable my refusal would be ascribed to this motive) or that the Country should harbour an idea that I am disposed to set little value on her favours, the manner of granting which is as flattering, as the grant is important. My present difficulties however shall be no impediment to the progress of the undertaking. I will receive the full and frank opinions of my friends with thankfulness. I shall have time enough between the sitting of the next Assembly to consider the tendency of the act, and in this, as in all other matters, will endeavor to decide for the best.

My respectful compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington and Fanny Bassett (who is much recovered) join, are offered to Mrs. Harrison and the rest of your family. It

would give us great pleasure to hear that Mrs. Harrison had her health restored to her. With every sentiment of esteem, regard and friendship. I am, etc.[47]

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, January 22, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your letter, with the Books, Potomac bill and other papers, did not reach this until past eleven o'clock on Monday forenoon; at which hour having set off for Alexandria, I did not receive the dispatches until my return in the evening. The next morning I forwarded the Bill to Messrs. Fitzgerald, Hartshorn to act upon, and to get a number of copies struck for promulgation, and the benefit of those who might wish to become subscribers. For the trouble you have had with the Books and for your care of the letters and papers which accompanied them, you will please to accept my thanks.

It would have given me much satisfaction if, instead of pursuing the rout thro' Frederick, you had resolved to have taken this road to the seat of Congress: besides the pleasure of seeing you, I wished to have had some conversation with you on the subject of the late generosity of the Assembly towards me; for I will freely confess to you my dear sir, that no circumstance has happened to me since I quited the walks of public life that has given me more embarrassment, than the act vesting me with 150 shares in the tolls of each of the rivers Potomac and James. On the one hand I consider this instance of the regard and attention of my native State as more than a mere compliment: this evidence of her good opinion and wishes to serve me is *unequivocal* and *substantial,* it has impressed me with sentiments

[47] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

of the deepest gratitude, and I should be hurt, if I could think that my non-acceptance . . .[48]

Did you not my good Sir tell me when I had the pleasure of spending an evening with you at Dumfries, that you either had or could procure me some Scions of the Aspin tree? Are there any young shoots which could he had of the Yew tree, or Hemlock (for I do not now recollect which of these it is) that grows on the Margin of Quantico Creek? Plantations of this kind are now become my amusement and I should be glad to know where I could obtain a supply of such sorts of trees as would diversify the scene. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[49]

*To BUSHROD WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, January 22, 1785.

Dear Bushrod: The enclosed letter was brought here some days ago. I desire you will present Mr. Ryan's note to him for payment; which, if not immediately made, or such assurances as you can rely on, that he will make in a very short time, return it to me or Mr. Rumsey,[50] if he is in Richmond, as I do not incline to transfer the debt from him to Ryan. It was not my intention to receive an order upon any one, for the Sum contained in the Note. It was sent about the time it became due to Mr. Henderson[51] (one of the Members for this Country) to receive for me, who not having an oppertunity of presenting it (on Acct. of Mr. Ryans indisposition at Petersburgh) returned it to me a few days since.

As you are now at the fountain head of information, I should be glad if you would examine into, and send me a Copy of

[48] The omitted portion is practically the same as Washington's letter to Benjamin Harrison, the same date as this letter (Jan. 22, 1785), *q. v.*

[49] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[50] James Rumsey.

[51] Richard Henderson.

some Ordainance which must have passed (according to Colo. Crawfords letter to me) at the Session next preceeding the 20th. of Septr. 1776. (which is the date of that letter).

There are some other little matters which I wanted you to do for me in Richmond, but they have escaped my recollection at this moment; when they occur again, I will write, the Ordinance above, may be necessary in the prosecution of my Ejectments over the Mountains, as Colo. Crawford in his letter to me says, it passed with an eye to such cases as mine, upon his representation.

All here join in best wishes for you, and I am etc.[52]

To MATTHEW CAMPBELL

January 22, 1785.

Sir: Understanding that Mr. Wilson of Alexandria was empower'd to sell the plaister of Paris which you had just sent to that place, I informed him by Mr. L. W——[53] of the mistake under which a vessel load of it had been landed at my wharf, but that, as it was there, I was willing to pay for it at the same rate as that which was in Alexandria should sell. To this, some considerable time after (if my memory serves) he answered, that the matter must be settled with you.

It now remains for me sir, to bring you acquainted with the exact state of this matter, and on which you may depend. On my return from Richmond in Novr. last, Mr. Graham[54] informed me that you had received (I think he said) about 50 tons of this stone, and asked if I wanted any of it. I answered that I might take a little of it, at any rate, merely for experiment as a manure; but that taking a large quantity, would depend

[52] From a photostat of the originally kindly furnished by William Smith Mason, of Evanston, Ill.

[53] Lund Washington.

[54] Robert(?) Graham, of Fairfax, Va.

altogether upon the price of it, of which he was to know the lowest, and give me an account. Under this idea, and waiting for this information, I left no direction concerning this matter when I accompanied the Marquis de la Fayette to Annapolis, during my absence there, the plaister arrived: those about me not knowing what to do in the matter, and supposing, I presume, that I had ordered it, suffered it to be landed: which I most assuredly would not have done; had I been at home, at any thing like the price mentioned in Mr. Grahams letter.

The plaister is yet on my wharf in the order it was first landed, except that I had the powdered part of it, the virtue of which (if it ever possessed any as a manure) I presume must have been nearly exhausted, put into casks. I am yet willing to take it at whatever price that which is in Alexandria shall sell; or at any reasonable price to be agreed upon between ourselves, or by others on our behalf. More I think under the circumstances I have related, no person will think I ought to pay. Twelve Dollars per ton, I never can consent to give; nor do I think you would desire it, when I inform you that before the war, I got all I wanted from Fitzhughs[55] in Maryland for digging out of the Bank; and that it never was, nor can be considered as of much more value than lime-stone, being of the nature of it. I am, etc.[56]

To THOMAS CLARKE[57]

Mount Vernon, January 25, 1785.

Sir: In your name and behalf Mr. Laurens,[58] as he passed thro' this State last month on his way from the seat of Congress

[55] William Fitzhugh.
[56] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[57] Of London.
[58] Henry Laurens.

to Charleston presented me a very handsome gold headed Cane; and accompanied it with such favorable sentiments of your good wishes towards the American revolution, and the flattering opinion you entertained of me, as to induce me, contrary to my usual custom, to accept of it. With this acknowledgment thereof, I beg you to receive my thanks for so evincive a mark of your esteem and approbation, and the assurances of my being, Sir, Yrs. etc.[59]

To SIR JAMES JAY

Mount Vernon, January 25, 1785.

Sir: By means of the frost, and the consequent interruption of the Post, your favor of the 20th. of December did not come to my hands until the 17th. instant. It is to be regretted that Lady Huntingtons communications were not earlier made to the several Legislatures to whom they were addressed; for if the circumstances of any will allow them to be adopted, it will be found that a year will have been lost by the delay. In some States, they must have reached the Executive after the Assemblies were up; in others, would get there towards the close of them, when fresh matters are rarely attended to, and some Sessions (as in this State) holden but once a year.

I am clearly in sentiment with her Ladyship, that christianity will never make any progress among the Indians, or work any considerable reformation in their principles, until they are brought to a state of greater civilization; and the mode by which she means to attempt this, as far as I have been able to give it consideration, is as likely to succeed as any other that could have been devised, and may in time effect the great and benevolent object of her Ladyships wishes: but that love of ease,

[59] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

impatience under any sort of controul, and disinclination to every kind of pursuit but those of hunting and war, would discourage any person possessed of less piety, zeal and philanthrophy than are characteristick of Lady Huntington.

Of all the States to which her Ladyships addresses are gone, New York I believe is the only one that *now* possesses unlocated lands in such quantities, and so contiguous to any Indian settlement, as to subserve her Ladyships plan of emigration; and whether that State can accommodate them to her and their satisfaction, you can determine with more precision than I. No part of the Western Territory of Pennsylvania is very contiguous to the habitations of the Indians, and if I mistake not, is besides otherwise appropriated. Virginia is not more convenient to them than Pennsylvania, and in her cession to the United States she was obliged to reserve Lands No. West of the Ohio to fulfil her own engagements to the military of the State: nothing then, in my opinion can be expected from her. And North Carolina having also made a similar cession is I believe, equally incapacitated to grant any great quantity of land in a body, or much in parcels. It is my opinion therefore, that Lady Huntington's proposals would come more properly before the United States, than any one, or more of them individually; and it is my sentiment clearly, that besides the pious and humane purposes which are in view, and of which we should never lose sight, motives of a political nature, should have considerable influence, because such a migration as her ladyship proposes must be an acquisition to any Country. There are but two reasons which my imagination suggests that can be opposed to it: the first is, the pressing Debts of the United States which may call for all the revenue which can be drawn from the most advantageous sale of their lands, and the discontents which might flow from discrimination; if peculiar exemptions

in the original purchase, or indulgencies thereafter, are expected in favor of the class of Settlers proposed by the plan. And secondly, (which may have more weight) the prejudices of Monarchical people when they are unmixed with republicans, against those who have separated from them, and against their forms of Government; and this too in the vicinity of a British one, viz: Canada. Whether these are to be placed in competition with the charitable design of the plan, considered in a religeous point of view; or the great good which may result from the civilization of numerous tribes of Savages when measured on the political scale, becomes the wisdom of the honorable body to weigh with attention.

If they should decide in favor of the measure, valuable Lands with respect to fertility of soil, salubrity of climate and other natural advantages might, in one body, and in any quantity may be reserved for the purposes of such emigration, until the result of her Ladyship, endeavors to obtain them, could be known; and this too either in the vicinity of the Indian towns, or at such convenient distance from them as might be most agreeable to the emigrants, there being no settlements or appropriations (except the reservation in favor of the Virginia line of the Army) to my knowledge in all the Country No. West of the Ohio, that could interfere therewith.

As I am well acquainted with the President of Congress, I will in the course of a few days write him a private letter on this subject giving the substance of Lady Huntington's plan[60] and asking his opinion of the encouragement it might expect to receive from Congress if it should be brought before that honorable body. Were you to do the same with your brother Mr. John Jay now in Congress, and than whom none can judge better of the propriety of the measure, or give greater support

[60] Under date of Feb. 8, 1785, in the *Washington Papers*.

to it if it should ultimately come before that supreme Council of the nation, it might lay the foundation which might be serviceable hereafter.

Without reverberating the arguments in support of the humane and benevolent intention of Lady Huntington to christianize and reduce to a state of civilization the Savage tribes within the limits of the American States, or discanting upon the advantages which the Union may derive from the Emigration which is blended with, and becomes part of the plan, I highly approve of them, and having, tho' concisely, touched upon the material parts of your letter, it only remains for me to express my good wishes for the success of such a measure, and to assure you that wherein I can be instrumental to its execution, my best endeavours may be commanded. I have the honor, etc.[61]

*To MRS. PATIENCE WRIGHT

Mount Vernon, January 30, 1785.

Madam: By what means it came to pass, I shall not undertake to devise; but the fact is, that your letter of the 8th. of December 1783, never got to my hands until the 12th. of the same Month in the year following. This will account for my not having acknowledged the receipt of it sooner; and for not thanking you as I now do, before, for the many flattering expressions contained in it.

If the Bust which your Son has modelled of me, should reach your hands, and afford your celebrated Genii any employment, that can amuse Mrs. Wright, it must be an honor done me. and if your inclination to return to this Country should overcome

[61] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On January 27 Washington wrote a brief note to Gov. William Moultrie, introducing Count Castiglioni, an Italian nobleman. This letter is in the Long Island Historical Society.

other considerations, you will, no doubt, meet a welcome reception from your Numerous friends: among whom, I should be proud to see a person so universally celebrated; and on whom, Nature has bestowed such rare and uncommon gifts. I am, etc.[62]

To JOSEPH WRIGHT

Mount Vernon, January 30, 1785.

Sir: It has so happened that your Card of Septr. 1st, with the Bust which accompanied it, did not get to my hands until sometime in the course of last month: and that a letter from your good mother dated Decr. 8th. 1783, only reached me the 12th. of last December.

For the first you will please receive the united acknowledgements and thanks of Mrs. Washington and myself. The large one she prays may give you no uneasiness or hurry; your convenience in the execution will be most agreeable to her wishes.

In answer to the second, I give you the trouble of forwarding the enclosed letter when you may have occasion to write to England, our best wishes attend you; and I am, etc.[63]

*To ÆNEAS LAMONT

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1785.

Sir: The interruption of the Post by the frost, withheld your letter of the 31st. Ulto. from me until within a few days.

The liberty you have taken in dedicating your Poetical Works to me, does me honor. The conditions upon which you offer them to the Public are generous, evincive of their purity,

[62] From a photostat of the original in the British Museum, *Additional Manuscript* 12099.

[63] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

and conscious worth. I shall with pleasure therefore take a few copies of the bound and lettered Books, when they are ready for delivery.

It behoves me to correct a mistake in your printed address, "To the patrons of the fine Arts" I am no Marshall of France,[64] nor do I hold any Commission, or fill any Office under that Government, or any other whatever. I am etc. [H.S.P.]

To ELIAS BOUDINOT

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Under a full persuasion that my letter of Novr., to you, had miscarried, I wrote to you again by the last post, and recited the contents of it. After having done this, I was honored with your favor of the 14th. of last month.

At the same time that I thank you for your attention to my request respecting the Orchard grass seed; I have to lament that it should be the means of taking from you what you had provided for your own use; and to pray, if it is not now too late, that you would not forward it to Colo. Biddle, or at most, not more than part of it. I can only repeat the assurances of my last, in which Mrs. Washington (who does not enjoy very good health) joins, of the good wishes and sincere esteem and regard with which, I am, etc.[65]

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM PACA

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1785.

Sir: Altho' I have no doubt, but that your Excellency has been, or will be informed of the Act of the Virginia Assembly

[64] Lamont's preface is probably partially responsible for the existence of the misstatement that Washington was a marshal of France.

[65] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

respecting the Potomac navigation, from the Governor of the State; yet, as the Act could not be printed at Richmond for the benefit of the Managers in time, and was brought to Alexandria for that purpose. And as a pressure of other public matters may possibly have delayed the Official communication. I do myself the honor of enclosing one of the copies which was struck at the above place, and which only came to my hands to be forwarded by this post. If it should be the first that you receive, you will have it in your power to make such use of it as you shall think proper: if it should follow the Official one, I have but to pray that it may be considered as an evidence of my good wishes to the undertaking, and not as an officious interference in the business of the Executive. I have the honor, etc.[66]

To UDNY HAY

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1785.

Sir: The interruption of the Post, by the frost, will occasion a delay of this answer, which otherwise would have been avoided.

Not being able to decypher the name of the Merchant in London, to whose care you desired my letter to your brother might be addressed, I send the enclosed certificate[67] for him, under cover to you.

I thank you for your kind and friendly wishes, and with Mrs. Washington's compliments to Mrs. Hay and yourself, and a return of friendly sentiments, I am, etc.[68]

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[66] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[67] A copy of this certificate, dated Feb. 1, 1785, is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers,* to the effect that "Neither directly, nor indirectly to my knowledge or belief, did I ever obtain the least information of the state of the British forces, or other concerns of theirs in Canada, from Mr. Charles Hay, a subject of Great Britain under that Government."

[68] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To ROBERT MORRIS

Mount Vernon, February 1, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the first of last month, by Doctr. Gilpin and Mr. Scott.[69] Mr. Colby, they informed me remained indisposed at Baltimore. It will always give me pleasure to see any Gentleman of your introduction. No apology therefore need ever accompany it.

Having begun a letter to you, I will take the liberty of suggesting a matter for your consideration; which, if it strikes you, in the important light it does me, and it is likely to be realized, you may profit by: if it does not, I hope at the same time that you may arraign my foresight, or charge me with being too sanguine, you will do justice to my motives: these, let me assure you, are friendly and pure.

No doubt, before this letter can have reached you, you will have heard, that the States of Virginia and Maryland have enacted laws for the purposes of opening and extending the navigations of the rivers Potomac and James, as far as is practicable; and communicating them by good roads with the nearest navigable waters (for inland craft) to the Westward; the first, to be undertaken by corporate companies with public aids: the other at public expence.

The tolls which are granted to encourage the first of these, are in my judgment, fully adequate to the purpose, as a candid man, I think them too high, considering the harvest which the public is preparing for the adventures in that undertaking, by opening a communication between the Atlantic and Western Territory: but the importance of the object, considered either in a commercial or political point of view is so great, the com-

[69] From the West Indies.

bination of favourable circumstances at this epocha so many, and the abilities of the two States under their present pressure of debts, so incompetent to a work of this sort (even if it had been judged the best mode), that to commence it without delay it was thought best to offer a productive field to those who are disposed to labour therein. And if I live to see the issue, I will, if it does not prove so, acknowledge myself more mistaken than I ever was before, in any speculative point.

I do not advance this doctrine my good sir, with a view to stimulate you to become a subscriber. If I was disposed to do this at the hazard of deception, I see not the occasion for it in the case before us; for it is more the expectation at present, that a redundency than a deficiency, will take place upon the opening of subscriptions for this river: And because your own judgment and convenience can best determine to what amount, or whether to subscribe anything towards the execution of this plan. There are some things however, of which some men have better opportunities to form opinions than others; and of the intercourse which this work is likely to open between the tide water of this river and the greatest extent of back Country within the United States. I have as good means to judge from as most men, and every proof that nature, and reflection upon its bountious gifts can adduce, to convince me that there is no field for commerce equal to it, if extent of Country, population, and produce with the conveniences of transportation, are essential to the encouragement and support of it. But these want to be embraced. This however, will not much longer be the case, a Mercantile eye is penetrating, and the first capital House, that is established may form connexions, and lay a sure foundation of trade to the greatest possible extent from the upper sea ports of this river.

No man who has any knowledge of the river Potomac, harbours a doubt of the practicability of its navigation from the great Falls to Fort Cumberland, (about 200 miles) and for 40 miles higher; and it is but very few only who have any doubt of the practicability of opening it from the great Falls, (inclusive) to tide water, which is under 9 miles. The acts I have spoken of are to encourage and authorise these; and, as I have observed before, sufficient priviledges and immunities are granted for the purpose.

From Fort Cumberland, a good road may be had to the Turkey foot, or three branches of the Yohoghaney, which will not I am told, exceed thirty miles. From thence the navigation to Fort Pitt, about 75 miles further, altho' there is one fall in the way, can be made good at a very moderate expence. By going up the No. branch of Potomac bout 40 miles above Fort Cumberland, a portage may be had with the Cheat river, which will not exceed 20 miles of good road, from hence to the Monongahela by land or water may be about 25 miles more. We are then, as in the case of the Yohoy. communication, open to the diffusive navigation (more extensive perhaps than is to be met with in any Country upon Earth) in its natural state, of the whole western Territory. And if I am not misinformed with respect to the carrying places between Cayahoga (a water of Lake Erie) and big beaver, and Muskingum, which disembogue into the Ohio at different points; there is no rout so short, so easy and attended with so little expence, as those I have just mentioned, to bring all the Fur and Peltry of the Lakes, even from that of the Wood, to tide water. One of them (by the Yohoghaney) is shorter by more than 150 miles, than that to either Albany or Montreal: and the way open at seasons, when the others are block'd, and is besides more independent of the interference of foreign powers;

That the greatest part, if not all the produce of the Ohio and its waters as low as the Falls, if a better channel cannot be found for part of it by way of the Gt. Kanhawa and James river to Richmond; or as low as the little Kanhawa, admitting this, I have very little doubt. It is true that there are some branches of the Alleghaney above Fort Pit, which communicate pretty nearly with the waters of Susquehanna, which by great exertion and expence, may be made use of at certain seasons of the year, but droughts in Summer, and Ice in Winter will render them of little value.

But to place things in a less favourable point of view, I will grant that a communication between the Kiskeminetas Moghulbughkitum, or Toby's Creek (waters most favourable for it) and the Susquehanna shall be opened, and that all the produce convenient thereto, shall be transported that way to the Markets below: that the Gt. Kanhawa shall be found free from obstructions, and easy both in its navigation, and communication with James river, and that all the province below the mouth of the former, and as far up the Ohio as the Little Kanhawa, shall be transported that way: there yet remains the thick settlement of the Ohio, between Fort Pitt and Wheeling, all the Settlement of the Monongahela, and all that of Yohioghany, which constitute a very large majority of the Inhabitants West of the Laurel hill, to bring their produce to the Markets of this river.

In admitting this, I admit, in my opinion a good deal; but if the plan for opening the navigation of Potomac should succeed, of which I have not the smallest doubt, I will go further and venture an assertion which I think is founded in fact; that without any support from the Western Territory, there is no place within my knowledge to which so much produce will, from the nature of things, be brought, as to the highest shipping port on

this river. That this may not appear as mere assertion, I will give you my reasons.

At present Baltimore not only receives the greatest part of the produce of Frederick County (Maryland) and the Counties above it on the No. side of Potomac, but a great deal also of that which is raised on the south side; and this thro' a long land transportation: besides which, the produce of that rich and extensive Country, between the blue ridge and Alleghany mountains, for at least 200 miles So. West of the Potomac, is (or such part of it as will bear land transportation; carried partly to Alexandria, and the towns below it on this river, partly to Fredericksburgh and Falmouth on Rappahannock, partly to Richmond and Petersburgh, and some part also to Hanover town, the highest navigation upon York river. But let the benefits arising from water transportation, be once felt, and then see, if men possessed of the spirit of Commerce and large capitals should settle at the shipping ports at the head of this river, whether an atom of it will cross the Potomack for Baltimore; whilst every thing within its vortex on the No. side will be sucked into, and be transported by water. In like manner the Shannondoah will intercept every article 200 miles from its mouth, and water bear it to the Markets at the head of this river. In Septembr. last I was on the Shannondoah, near or quite 150 Miles from its mouth, and was told by well informed Gentlemen living thereon that the navigation of it might be improved, and rendered fit for inland craft at the smallest expence imaginable, the distance here mentioned. In a word, the Shannondoah which runs thro' the richest tract of Country in this State, the South branch of Potomac, which may, with great ease be made navigable 100 miles, and the intermediate streams of lesser note which pour into Potomac; will not only bring the land transportation of every farmer and Planter in that Country, within

the short distance of fifteen or twenty miles, but in the upper and more remote parts of it, induce hundreds and thousands of them to cultivate articles from the growth of which they have been entirely discouraged by the length and expence of land transportation, except in the article of live stock which will carry itself to market, attempting to raise no more than will supply their own necessities. On the other side of the river, the Conogoge and Monocasy, tho' of less importance, will be improved to great advantage.

The mercantile interest of Baltimore affect to treat the extension of the navigation of Potomac as a chimerical plan; but you may be assured Sir, that from the Great Falls, which are within eight or nine miles of tide water, to Fort Cumberland, there is no more difficulty or uncertainty in the execution, comparatively speaking, than there is in bringing water to a Mill by a common race: of nothing more therefore is ever effected, the object notwithstanding is immense, when the field into which it leads is considered. But I have no doubt of the practicability of accomplishing the whole if properly undertaken.

In one or two places of this letter, I have observed that to make proper advantages of this navigation, and the extensive commerce it opens a door to; it requires a large capital as well as a Commercial spirit. I will explain myself.

Alexandria and Georgetown are the highest shipping Ports of this river (if the latter can be call'd one); the trade of Georgetown, I am but little acquainted with; but if I have formed a right idea of the former, it abounds in small dealers: Men who import, or purchase their goods in the Country upon credit, consequently obtain them under very great disadvantages: the former class too for the most part, go to one Market, chiefly to England, for every article they purchase; by which means, such manufactures as Holland, Germany, France &ca. could supply

upon much better terms, (being of their own production) come with accumulated charges. These added to House rent, which is high in Alexandria, and sinks deep into the profits of a small capital, occasion considerable advance of the price of Goods, the consequence of which is, that the retail dealers in the interior parts of the Country, are induced to go, indeed are in a manner driven, to Baltimore or Philadelphia for their goods. How otherwise is this fact, and the transportation of the staple and other produce of this country, to those markets to be accounted for? The navigation of this river is equal, if not superior to any in the Union. Goods, I presume may be imported into it, and the produce of the Country exported from it, upon as advantageous terms, as they can from either Philadelphia, Baltimore or any other place, which evinces the truth of my observation, or that the traders of Alexandria are not content with the profits of their fellow labourers in the places I have named. But would either of these any longer exist if large whole-sale Stores, upon the most advantageous terms, were established in that place? And the produce of the back Country brought thither by water, for one fourth of what it is now by land, or a sixth, perhaps tenth, (according to the distance it is carried) of what it can be transported to Baltimore?

At present every farmer who lives on the West side of the blue ridge verging upon Shenandoah, gives I am told one third of his wheat for bringing the other two thirds to any shipping port. Tobacco costs at least 40/ a Hhd., and other things in proportion. A little higher up, and the expence of transportation to a prohibition of the culture of them; tho' the land is better adapted, than any other in the State for the cultivation of them. But if water transportation is effected, that which now costs a ⅓., may be delivered for 6d. or less a bushel, and where the expence of carriage has hitherto discouraged the growth of it

altogether, it will be raised in great quantities, and so with respect to Tobo. and other articles.

Having given you this statement of the matter which has fallen under my observation, and which is not exagerated in any instance intentionally, I leave you to compare it with other information and your own observations, if you have opportunities of making any and drawing your own conclusions. I have no other objects in view, but to promote a measure which I think is pregnant with great public utility, and which may at the same time, be made subservient to extensive private advantages. Were I disposed to encounter present inconvenience for a future income, I would hazard all the money I could raise upon the navigation of the river. Or had I inclination and talents to enter into the commercial line, I have no idea of a better opening than the one I discanted upon to make a fortune. But the first has no charms for me, and the other I never shall engage in. My best respects and good wishes, with which Mrs. Washingtons are united, are offered to Mrs. Morris and the rest of your family; and I am, etc.

P.S. I send you a copy of the Bill[70] passed by the two States, for opening and extending the navigation of the river Potomac.[71]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, February 1, 1785.

Dear Sir: In a letter of the 14th. of Decr. from Mr. Boudinot (which only came to my hands by the last Post) he informs me that he should send Six bushls. of the Orchard grass Seeds to your care for my use. If this has been done, I pray you not

[70] The engrossed bill, which passed the Virginia House of Delegates, was lent to Washington to save time in getting copies printed. He returned it to the Clerk of the House, John Beckley, in a brief note, dated Feb. 5, 1785.

[71] Both the letter and a copy of this note to Beckley are in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

to forego the first opportunity of forwarding it to me, as it ought to be Sowed as soon as the ground can be prepared, which I am now getting in order for its reception.

It do not know how to account for it, but so the fact is, that altho' I am a Subscriber to Messrs. Dunlap and Claypoole's Packet and daily Advertiser, I do not get one paper in five of them, was I to say one of ten, I should be nearer the mark. Once I wrote to Mr. Claypoole on this subject, but he never vouchsafed to give me an answer, and since I have been worse served. If I recollect right, this letter was accompanied with one to you requesting payment of my subscription; lest a tardiness in this respect, on my part, might occasion the ommissions on his. I now ask the same favor of you, and pray also, that you would be so obliging as to enquire into, and let me know the cause of my disappointments. which I have regretted the more, since their publication of Cookes voyages; having never been able to get a bound and lettered sett of them.

Be it remembered that, if the fulfilment of these requests of mine, places you in advance for me, it is because I cannot get a statement of the acct. between us, that I may know how the Balle. stands.

You talked of coming to Virginia, and I assure you I should be very glad to see you; but it seems as if it would end in talk.

I have received a Cask of clover Seeds and a box with a cast (from Mr. Wright) unaccompanied by a letter or Invoice. I do not know therefore whether to expect the English grass seed of which you gave me hopes, or not. We have heard of Mrs. Shaws marriage, on which occasion please to offer her mine, and Mrs. Washingtons compliments of congratulation, at the sametime present our best wishes for Mrs. Biddle and your family. I am etc.

PS. Be so good as to let the enclosed go safe to Messrs. Lewis's. it is to request them to provide me a *good* Miller of

which I am much in want, and in the doing of which, if you could contribute, it would render me an essential Service.

Since writing the foregoing, I have recollected a matter of business which I intended when you came here to have asked the favor of you to negotiate for me. I now enclose it, and would thank you for getting it settled if it is to be done, at the proper Office in Philadelphia. The endorsements upon the cover of the Papers (which was made at the time they were put into my hands) contain all the light I can throw upon the business.[72] I pray you to take care of it with the rest of the Papers and let me have it again with whatever settlement is made, or decision is come to; as I have no copy, or other Memm. by which I can settle an acct. with Gilbert Simpson, or John Johns relative to this matter. I am as above. [H.S.P.]

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, February 1, 1785.

Gentn: You may think me very troublesome; and the reason I assign for it, which is, an opinion that you can serve me better than any other, no good apology for the liberty I take.

My Miller (Wm. Roberts) is now become such an intolerable sot, and when drunk so great a Madman, that, however unwilling I am to part with an old Servant (for he has been with me fifteen years) I cannot with propriety or common justice to myself bear with him any longer. I pray you once more therefore, to engage and forward a Miller for me as soon as you may have it in your power, and whatever engagement you shall enter into on my behalf I will religeously fulfill. I do not stipulate for the wages; Altho' my mill (being on an indifferent stream, and not constant at work) can illy afford high

[72] Biddle's answer (Mar. 7, 1785) does not explain this business.

wages. My wish is to procure a person who understands the manufacturing business perfectly, and who is sober and honest, that I may even at the expence of paying for it, have as little trouble as possible with him. If he understood the business of a Mill-wright and was obliged by his agreement to keep the Mill in repair, so much the better. Whatever agreement you may enter into on my behalf, let it be reduced to writing and specifically declared, that there may be no misconception or disputes thereafter.

The House in which he will live is a very comfortable one and within 30 yards of the Mill (which works two pair of stones, one pair french Bur's), there is a small Kitchen convenient thereto, and a good Garden under paling. There is a Cowpers[73] shop within a hundred yards of the mill, with three negro Cowpers, which will also be under the direction of the miller, whose allowance of meat, flour, and priviledges of every kind, I would have ascertained to prevent after claims. I do not object to the mans having a family, a wife I shou'd wish him to have, but I wou'd it not be *too* large. At any rate be so good as to let me hear from you, that I may know on what to rely, as it is not safe for me to entrust my business any longer in the hands of Wm. Roberts. It only remains now to ask your forgiveness for this trouble and to assure you that I am Gentn. Yr. etc.[74]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, February 2, 1785.

Dear Sir: The Writer[75] of the inclosed letter, in person and character, is entirely unknown to me. I have been at a loss

[73] Cooper.
[74] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[75] Aeneas Lamont.

therefore to determine what notice to take of it. At length I concluded to write the answer which is also enclosed; and to request the favor of you to send it to him, or return it to me, as you should just [*sic*] best from the result of your enquiries; or from your own knowledge of the author, or his Works. If he is a man of decent deportment, and his productions deserving encouragement, I am very willing to lend him any aid he can derive from the proposed dedication, if he conceives a benefit. His letter and proposals you will please return me. and Seal the letter to him, if it is forwarded to the Address. I am, etc. [H.S.P.]

To OTHO HOLLAND WILLIAMS

Mount Vernon, February 2, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your letter of the 24th. ulto. with eighty three Diplomas[76] came to my hands on Monday last. I have signed and returned them to Colo. Fitzgerald to be forwarded to you.

It would be hard indeed upon Majr. Turner[77] and Captn. Claypoole[78] not only to give them the trouble of producing the Diplomas, but to saddle them with the expence of it also. Was there no provision made therefore at the General Meeting? Do not the minutes of that Meeting devise some mode of payment? I well remember that the matter was agitated, but I forgot what, or whether any conclusion was come to: and recollect also that I desired Genl. Knox when difficulties arose with respect to the business which had been entrusted to Majr. L'Enfant to suggest, that the sum which I had proposed to subscribe for the purposes of the Society might be applied to any uses the Meeting should direct; but what the result of

[76] Of the Society of the Cincinnati.
[77] Maj. George Turner, formerly of the First South Carolina Regiment.
[78] Capt. Abraham George Claypoole, formerly of the Third Pennsylvania Regiment.

it was, I know not. It was observed at that time, that there was money in the hands of the Treasurer General, but not having the proceedings to refer to, and a bad memory to depend upon, these things appear like dreams to me. With great esteem and regard I am, etc.[79]

*AGREEMENT WITH BENJAMIN DULANY AND WIFE

February 4, 1785.

The agreement between Mr. Dulany, in behalf of himself and Mrs. Dulany (his wife) of the one part, and G. Washington of the other part, is for an exchange of Lands upon the following conditions.

Mr. and Mrs. Dulany are to give all the Land which the latter has a right to, in *reversion,* at the demise of Mrs. French[80] her Mother, and which Danl French Esq her father died possessed of by many of several purchases which he made at sundry times from Osborne and others out of a Patent granted by the Lord Culpeper Proprietor of the Northn. Neck to Colo. Nicholas Spencer and Lieutt Colo. John Washington, the 1st. day of March 1674 for 5000 Acs. on Potomack River, between little Hunting Creek and Ipsewassan, now commonly called and known by the name of Dogue Creek, which said several purchases are now bounded by the Lands of the sd. G Washington, a small tract of 150 Acres belonging to the Heirs of Harrison Manley deceased, the said Dogue Creek, and Potomack River. containing by the sevl. Deeds of conveyance Acres, be the same more or less.

In lieu of this, the said G Washington is to give the Land which he holds on Great Hunting Creek, by purchase from

[79] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[80] Mrs. Penelope French.

Messrs. Adam, Dow and McIver, for Acres be the same more or less, it being the Land which the said Dow is in the tenure and occupation of, as a Tenant at Will.

But inasmuch as the Lands which are to be conveyed by Mr. and Mrs. Dulany are reversionary *only,* and at present are held, and may continue to be so held, by Mrs. French under the Will of her deceased husband during her natural life, which may prevent the said G Washington from obtaining possession, or enjoying any benefit therefrom under this exchange during that period. It is agreed between the parties, and is expressly to be declared, that until the said G Washington, his heirs &ca. shall arrive to the full and absolute possession of the above Lands (now only obtained in reversion) by the demise of Mrs. French or by a full and absolute conveyance without further compensation on the part of the said G Washington from her who at present is the rightful owner thereof, the said Mr. Dulany, his Heirs &ca. is to pay into the said G Washington his Heirs &ca. the annual Sum of One hundred and twenty pounds Specie, or the value thereof; being the present Rent which is paid by the said Dow for the Land given by the said G Washington for the reversionary right of that which is to be conveyed by Mr. and Mrs. Dulany.

Conformably to this Statement of the Agreement between Mr. Dulany and G W, Mr. Lee will draw proper, and effectual instruments of writing, for ratifying, and confirming the same, so as to render the exchange final and binding, upon the parties; that a record thereof may be had.

NB. The first Rent to be paid by Mr. Dulany, his heirs, or &ca. will become due and payable on the first day of Jany; which shall be in the year 1787. The growing rent for the year 1785, and the rent which is now due for the year past, the said G Washington is to look to the present tenant, Mr. Dow for the payment thereof. [H. S. P.]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

Sir: I have lately received two letters from you, one of the 14th and the other of the 25th of last month.

The Bonds which you have taken from Mr. Whiting[81] had better remain in your hands until they are discharged and by the time you propose to be at Belvoir in April I will endeavor to prepare a proper Rental for you if it shall be in my power from the pressure of other matters.

It was always my intention and ever my expectation that the Tenants should pay the taxes of their own Lotts, but if the Leases neither expresses nor implies it I do not suppose there is anything else to compel them, consequently Mr. Whiting must be allowed such sums as he has actually paid; look however at his Lease and judge yourself of the fact as I speak more from what ought to be perhaps than what really is, and do not want to enter into an improper litigation of the matter. I am etc.

P. S. Mrs. Washington begs you would get from some of my Tenants, or others, 10 or a dozen lbs. of good hackled Flax for her.[82]

To BENJAMIN VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

Sir: I pray you to accept my acknowledgment of your polite letter of the 31st. of October, and thanks for the flattering expressions of it. These are also due in a very particular manner

[81] Henry Whiting.

[82] This "Letter Book" text in the *Washington Papers* has been checked against that printed in the Washington and Tilghman sale catalogue (Birch's Sons, Philadelphia, 1892) and justifiable changes made accordingly. The P. S. is not in the "Letter Book" copy.

to Doctr. Price,[83] for the honble mention he has made of the American General in his excellent observations on the importance of the American revolution addressed, "To the free and United States of America," which I have seen and read with much pleasure.

Captn. Haskell in the Ship May arrived at Alexandria a few days ago; but a frost which at present interrupts the navigation of the river, has prevented my sending for the Chimney piece: by the number of cases however, I greatly fear it is too elegant and costly for my room, and republican stile of living. I regret exceedingly that the politeness of your good Father should have overcome my resolution, and thereby occasion the trouble and difficulty which this business seems to have involved. Nothing could have been more remote from my intentions than to give this, and I earnestly, but in vain, entreated Mr. Vaughan to countermand his order for the shipment of it. I have the honor, etc.[84]

To SAMUEL VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have the honor to inform you that the Chimney piece is arrived, and by the number of Cases (ten) too elegant and costly by far I fear for my room, and republican stile of living, tho' it encreased the sense of my obligation to you for it. The Ship arrived at her Port just as this second frost set in, so that it has not been in my power to send up for these cases by water; and I would not hazard the transportation of them by land, nine miles.

They were accompanied by a very polite letter from your Son Benjamin Vaughan Esqr. of London, to whom under

[83] Rev. Richard Price, English nonconformist minister and author.
[84] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

cover with this, I have acknowledged the receipt, with thanks for the favourable expression of it. I hope Mrs. Vaughan and your family enjoy good health, to whom with Mrs. Washington's compliments, I pray to be presented in respectful terms. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[85]

To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Not until within these few days have I been favored with your letter of the 18th. of Octr. introductory of Mr. Porter. I beg you to be assured that I shall have pleasure in shewing him every civility in my power while he makes this region the place of his residence; as I shall to any other, to whom you may give letters recommendatory.

A few days ago I received from on board some vessel in the harbor of Alexana. two cheese's and a barrel (wrote thereon Major Rice)[86] of Cranberries, unaccompanied by letter, but said to be a present from you. If this be the fact I pray you to accept my thanks for this token of your recollection, or to offer them to Majr. Rice, if the barrel came from him.

We have nothing stirring in this quarter worthy of observation, except the passing of two Acts by the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland (exactly similar) for improving and extending the navigation of the river Potomac from tide water, as high up as it shall be found practicable, and communicating it by good roads with the nearest navigable waters to the Westward: which acts in their consequences, may be of great political, as well as commercial advantages: the first to the confederation, as it may tie the Settlers of the Western Territory

[85] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[86] Maj. Nathan Rice. He was formerly aide to General Lincoln.

to the Atlantic States by interest, which is the only knot that will hold. Whilst those of Virginia and Maryland will be more immediately benefited by the large field it opens for the latter. Books for receiving subscriptions are to be opened at Alexandria and other places the 8th. instant, and continue so until the 10th. of May; as the navigable part of the business is to be undertaken by a company to be incorporated for the purpose. With great truth and sincerity I am, etc.[87]

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, February 7, 1785.

My dear Humphreys: In my last, by the Marquis de la Fayette, I gave you reason to believe that when I was more at leizure, you should receive a long letter from me; however agreeable this might be to my wishes, the period it is to be feared, will never arrive. I can with truth assure you, that at no period of the war have I been obliged to write half as much as I now do, from necessity. I have been enquiring for sometime past, for a person in the character of Secretary or clerk to live with me; but hitherto unsuccessfully. What with letters (often of an unmeaning nature) from foreigners. Enquiries after Dick, Tom, and Harry who *may have been* in some part, or at *sometime,* in the Continental service. Letters, or certificates of service for those who want to go out of their own State. Introductions; applications for copies of Papers; references of a thousand old matters with which I *ought* not to be troubled, more than the Great Mogul, but which must receive an answer of some kind, deprive me of my usual exercise; and without relief, may be injurious to me as I already begin to feel the weight, and oppression of it in my head, and am assured by

[87] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

the *faculty,* if I do not change my course, I shall certainly sink under it.

After this preamble, which is not founded in fiction, you cannot expect much from me; nor indeed have I ought to relate that should claim much attention. All our assemblies have had long sessions, but I have not heard of any *very* important acts; none indeed more pregnant of political consequences, or commercial advantages, than two which have passed the Legislatures of Virginia and Maryland, for improving and extending the navigations of Potomack and James River as far as is practicable; and communicating them by short and easy roads with the Navigable waters to the Westward. I have sent Mr. Jefferson a copy of the act respecting the river Potomack, but can neither inform him, nor you, of the issue, as it depends wholly upon the subscription of what we have very little of, money.

If we are to credit newspaper accounts, the flames of war in Europe are again kindling: how far they may spread, neither the Statesman or soldier can determine; as the great governor of the Universe causes contingencies which baffle the wisdom of the first, and the foresight and valor of the Second.

All I pray for, is, that you may keep them among yourselves. If a single spark should light among the inflameable matter in these States, it may set them in a combustion, altho' they may not be able to assign a good reason for it.

I have received but two short letters from you since your arrival in France. The first at your place of debarkation. The second from Paris. Your third, [*sic*] altho' (in the beginning of this letter I assured you, and endeavoured to give reasons for it, which in the conclusion you see are invalidated) I am not able to write long ones to you, will not be altogether so laconic. a short transcript of your diary (for I have no doubt of your

keeping one) would be amusing to me, although I can give you nothing in return for it. but your own feelings, I am sure, have told you long ere this that there is more pleasure in confering, than receiving obligations.

Mrs. Washington enjoys but indifferent health. My nephew Geo. A. Washington has been buffetting the seas from clime to clime, in pursuit of health, but, poor fellow! I believe in vain. At present, if alive, I expect he is at Charleston. All the rest of my family are perfectly well, and join me in best wishes for you, with My dear Humphreys yr. etc.

P. S. Whilst I was in the act of enclosing this, yr. letters of the 30th. of Sept. and 11th. of Nov. were put into my hands; judge ye then, if I have leizure to write commentaries.[88]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since my last, I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 26th. of Decr. and 16th. of January. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have enacted Laws, of which the enclosed is a copy; they are exactly similar in both States. At the same time and at the joint and equal expence of the two Governments, the sum of 6666 2/3 Dollars are voted for opening and keeping in repair a road from the highest practicable navigation of this river, to that of the river Cheat or Monongahela, as commissioners (who are appointed to survey and lay out the same) shall find most convenient and beneficial to the Western Settlers: and have concurred in an application to the State of Pennsylvania for permission to open another road from Fort Cumberland

[88] The text is from the Washington-Humphreys copies in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., furnished through the kindness of the librarian, R. W. G. Vail.

to the Yohoganey, at the three forks or Turkey foot. A similar Bill to the one enclosed, is passed by our Assembly, respecting the navigation of James river, and the communication between it and the waters of the great Kanhawa, and the Executive authorised by a resolve of the Assembly to appoint Commissioners to examine and report the most convenient course for a canal between Elizabeth river and the waters of Roanoke; with an estimate of the expence: and if the best communication shall be found to require the concurrence of the State of No. Carolina thereto, to make application to the Legislature thereof accordingly.

Towards the latter part of the year 1783 I was honored with a letter from the Countess of Huntington, briefly reciting her benevolent intention of spreading Christianity among the Tribes of Indians inhabiting our Western Territory; and expressing a desire of my advice and assistance to carry this charitable design into execution. I wrote her Ladyship for answer, that it would by no means comport with the plan of retirement I had promised myself, to take an active or responsible part in this business; and that it was my belief, there was no other way to effect her pious and benevolent designs, but by first reducing these people to a state of greater civilization, but that I wou'd give every aid in my power, consistent with the ease and tranquility, to which I meant to devote the remainder of my life, to carry her plan into effect. Since that I have been favored with other letters from her, and a few days ago under cover from Sir James Jay the papers herewith enclosed.

As the plan contemplated by Lady Huntington, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object; and may I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before you for your

free and candid sentiments thereon; the communication I make of this matter to you sir, is in a private way, but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntington, to the members individually; or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these: 1st. I do not believe that any of the States to whom she has written (unless it may be New York) are in circumstances, since their cession of Territory, to comply with the requisition respecting emigration; for it has been privately hinted to me, and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety, that notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the Address respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants, which was purposely omitted to avoid giving alarms in England, the former will be great, and the useful artisans among them, many. 2d Because such emigration, if it should effect the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes which would be thereby answered, will be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her Ladyships wishes, it must nevertheless, be of considerable importance from the encrease of population by orderly and well disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier and attempt the conversion of the Indians without involving an expence to the Union. I see but one objection to a compact, unmixed and powerful settlement of this kind, if it is likely to be so, the weight of which you will judge. It is, (and her Ladyship seems to have been aware of it, and endeavours to guard against it) placing a people in a body upon our exterior, where they will be contiguous to Canada, who may bring with them strong prejudices against us, and our form of Government, and equally strong attachments to the country and Constitution they leave, without the means, being detached and unmixed with Citizens of different sentiments, of having them

eradicated. Her Ladyship has spoken so feelingly and sensibly, on the religeous and benevolent purposes of the plan, that no language of which I am possessed, can add aught to enforce her observations. And no place I think bids so fair to answer her views as that spot in Hutchin's map, mark'd Miami Village and Fort, from hence there is a communication to all parts by water and at which, in my opinion we ought to have a Post.

Do not think it strange my good Sir, that I send you the original papers from Lady Huntington. Many, mistakenly, think I am retired to ease and that kind of tranquility which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been *obliged* to write so much *myself,* as I have done since my retirement. Was this confined to friendly communications, and to my own business, it would be equally pleasing and trifling: but I have a thousand references of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled; but which, nevertheless, must receive some answer; these, with applications for certificates, copies of Orders &c. &c. &c. deprive me of my usual and necessary exercise.

I have tryed, but hitherto in vain, to get a Secretary or Clerk, to take upon him the drudging part of this business: that you might not wonder at my parting with original papers on an important subject, I thought it incumbent upon me to assign the reason, and I beg you to be assured, that I have *no* other motive for it.

Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlet you sent me, and for the resolutions respecting the temporary and permanent seat of Government. If I might be permitted to hazard an opinion of the latter, I would say, that by the time your Federal buildings on the banks of the Delaware, along the point of triangle, are fit for the reception of Congress; it will be found

that they are very improperly placed for the seat of the Empire, and will have to undergo a second edition in a more convenient one. If the union continues, and this is not the case, I will agree to be classed among the false prophets, and suffer for evil prediction. The letter for the Marqs. de la Fayette, I pray you to forward by the Packet. With great esteem and regard, I am etc.[89]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, February 15, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs. I have had the pleasure to receive your affectionate letter of the 21st. of December, dated on board the Nymph Frigate in the harbour of New York; and felt all that man could feel from the flattering expression of it.

My last to you, if I recollect right, was dispatched from Annapolis; whither I went at the request of this State to settle a plan (to be mutually adopted by the Legislatures of both States) for improving and extending the navigation of the river Potomac as far as it should be found practicable, and for opening a road of communication therefrom, to the nearest navigable water to the westward. In both, I happily succeeded. The Bill, of which I send you a copy, was prepared at that time, and has since passed both Assemblies in the usual forms, and must speak for itself. The road of communication is to be undertaken on public account, at the joint and equal expence of the two States. Virginia has passed a similar Act to the one enclosed, respecting James river, and its communication with the waters of the Great Kanhawa, and have authorized the Executive to appoint Commissioners to examine, and fix on

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the most convenient course for a canal from the waters of Elizabeth river, in this State, to those passing thro' the State of No. Carolina; and report their proceedings therein, with an estimate of the expence necessary for opening such Canal, to the next General Assembly.

Hence my dear Marquis you will perceive that the exertions which you found, and left me engag'd in, to impress my Countrymen with the advantages of extending the inland navigation of our rivers, and opening free and easy communications with the Western Territory (thereby binding them to us by interest, the only knot which will hold) has not been employ'd in vain. The Assembly of this State have accompanied these Acts with another, very flattering one for me, but which has been productive of infinitely more embarrassment than pleasure. This Act directs the Treasurer of the State to subscribe fifty shares in each of the navigations, Potomac and James, for my use and benefit,[90] which it declares is to be vested in me and my heirs forever: generous as this Act is, the reasons assigned for it, with the flattering, yet delicate expression thereof, renders it more valuable than the grant itself; and this it is which perplexes me. It is not my wish, nor is it my intention, to accept this gratuitous gift, but how to decline it with out appearing to slight the favors of my Country, committing an act of disrespect to the Legislature, or having motives of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness ascribed to me, I am at a loss: but will endeavour to hit upon some expedient before the next Session, to avoid these imputations. This was the closing Act of the last, without my having the most distant suspicion that such a matter was in contemplation; nor did I ever hear of it until it had passed, and the Assembly had adjourned.

[90] This may be an error of the "Letter Book" copyist. The act directed the subscription of 50 shares in the Potomac Navigation Co. and 100 shares in the James River Navigation Co.

With what readiness the subscription Books will fill, is not in my power at this early stage of the business, to inform you; in general, the friends to the measure are sanguine; but among those good wishes are more at command, than money, consequently it is not only uncertain of whom the company may consist, but (as its existence depends upon contingenices) whether there will be one or not. therefore at this moment we are all in the dark respecting this and other matters. One thing however is certain, namely, if a company should be established and the work is undertaken, a skilful Engineer, or rather a person of practical knowledge will be wanted to direct and superintend it. I should be glad therefore my Dr. Sir you would bear this matter in your mind, that if the company when formed should be disposed to obtain one from Europe, I should prefer France, proper characters may be applied to, without loss of time. You will readily perceive My Dr. Marqs. that this is more a private intimation of mine, than an authorized request, consequently how improper it would be to raise the expectation of any Gentleman to the employment, without being able to give him the appointment. If a company should be formed, it will be composed, no doubt of many men, and these of many minds; and whilst myself and others may be disposed to go to France for an Engineer, the majority may incline to send to England for one, on account of the language, and from an opinion that there is greater similarity between the inland navigation of that Kingdom and the improvements which are intended here, than prevails between any in France and them; whilst others again may turn their Eyes towards Holland. The nature of our work, as far as I have been able to form an opinion of it, will be first, at the principal falls of the river to let Vessels down by means of Locks, or, if Rumsey's plan should succeed, by regular or gradual slopes. in either case, the bad effect of Ice and drift wood in floods, are to be

guarded against. 2d. As the Canals at these places will pass thro' rocky ground, to be able to remove these with skill and facility, and to secure the Canals when made. 3dly. in other parts of the river, the water will require to be deepened, and in these places the bottom generally is either rock under water, or loose stone of different sizes; for it rarely happens that Sand or Mud is to be found in any of the shallow parts of the River. I mention these things because it is not the man who may be best skilled in Dikes; who knows best how to conduct water upon a level, or who can carry it thro' hills or over Mountains, that would be most useful to us.

We have had a mild winter hitherto, and nothing new that I recollect, in the course of it; for I believe Congress had determined before you left the Country, to fix their permanent seat in the vicinity of Trenton; and their temporary one at New York. The little Sprig at Annapolis, to whose nod so many lofty trees of the forest had bowed, has yielded the Sceptre. thursday last placed it at the feet of Mr. M:—— who perhaps may wield it with as much despotism as she did.

If I recollect right, I told you when here, that I had made one or two attempts to procure a good Jack Ass from Spain, to breed from. Colo. Hooe, or rather Mr. Harrison, was one of the Channels thro' which I expected to be supplied; but a day or two ago the former furnished me with the enclosed extract from the latter. As it is not convenient for me to pay such a price, I have desired Colo. Hooe to countermand the order, and the same causes induce me to pray, that if these are the prices of a good Jack (and no other I would have) that you would decline executing the commission I gave you of a similar kind.

I will use my best endeavours to procure the seeds (from Kentucky) which are contained in your list; but as the dis-

tance at which I live from that country is great, and frequent miscarriages of them may happen, you must prepare yourself for delay.

I will write as you desire, to Cary[91] the late Printer of the Volunteer Journal in Ireland. Bushrod Washington, sensible of your polite invitation, but unable to avail himself of it, wrote you a letter of grateful acknowledgments and thanks; which letter I sent under cover to the President of Congress with a request to deliver it to you, but you had sailed: I presume he has since forwarded it to you.

I am possessed of the Cypher[92] which was used by Mr. Livingston whilst he was Secretary of foreign affairs; if therefore he had not different ones, I can when necessary, correspond with you in his.

Every body of this family, and those who are connected with it, join in the most sincere and affectionate wishes for you and yours, with the most affectionate of your friends

P. S. If it should so happen that the subscriptions for opening the navigations of the rivers Potomac and James should not (from the want of money here) fill in the time required by the Acts, do you think that there are persons of your acquaintance in France who might incline to become adventurers in it? I give it as my *decided* opinion to you that *both* are practicable beyond all manner of doubt: and that men who can afford to lay a little while out of their money, are laying the foundation of the greatest returns of any speculation I know of in the world.[93]

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[91] Mathew Carey.

[92] There are several undated ciphers in the *Washington Papers*, grouped at the end of the year 1783. One is Maj. Benjamin Tallmadge's cipher and another is Robert Morris's; but none of them are labeled as Robert R. Livingston's cipher.

[93] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To CHARLES LEE[94]

Mount Vernon, February 20, 1785.

Dear Sir: My Servant did not return with your letter, and the Papers therewith, until Nine o'clock last night; so that I have scarcely had time to read the several Conveyances. In that from Mr and Mrs Dulany to me there is a capitol error. the Land held by the deceased Mr. French, under the Proprietors Deed to Stephens and Violet, is no part of the Land exchanged. The original grant to Spencer and Washington, comprehends all the land Mr. and Mrs. Dulany is to give for mine; and these are held by purchases from Richd. Osborne (the quantity I know not) Arbuthnot for 150 Acres; Manley for 68 acres; and John Posey for 136 Acres.

If it is not essential to recite the quantities of Land had from each of the persons, with the dates of the several transfers of them, in order to give valuation to the Deed of Conveyance from Mr. and Mrs. Dulany; I see not the least occasion for it, on any other Acct.; because, if they convey all their right to the Land within Spencer and Washingtons Patent, it gives all I want, and cannot in the remotest degree affect any other Land they have, because they hold none other, within several Miles of it. and because it would be sufficiently descriptive, as the Patent of Spencer and Washington is well known, and the boundaries of it will admit of no alteration, having the River, Hunting Creek and Ipsawassen (or Dogues Creek) and a strait line between the two last for its limits.

For these reasons I should think, if at the end of the mark No. 1 line 29, you were to add "by means of sundry purchases

[94] Brother of "Light Horse Harry." He was naval officer for the Southern Potomac, U. S. Collector of Customs, Alexandria, Va., in 1789, and Attorney General of the United States from 1795 to 1801.

by him made from Richard Osborne, the Executrix of Thos. Arbuthbot, John Manley, John Posey &ca. containing in Spencers moiety of the said Patent" (if it is necessary to specify the quantity) "by estimation about 500 acres of Land, be the same more or less". it wd. make the matter sufficiently clear for the precise quantity can only be ascertained by a strict investigation of lines and actual measurement; as part of Mr Frenchs purchases run into Washingtons moiety of the Patent, which can not be affected, tho' to ascertain the different lines, and rights, would give trouble, and was one inducement for me to make the exchange.

In whatever manner you Judge best, draw the Deed accordingly, all I pray is, that it may be ready for the Court, this day. nothing else brings me up, and it is inconvenient to leave home. Besides, Mrs. Washington, tho' not very well, will attend, in order to make a finish of the business. With much esteem &ca. I am etc.

P. S. As the Land I get, comes by Mrs. Dulany would it not have been right to have given her the same interest in the Tract I convey? this by the by, only. And should not there have been a note of the interliniation respecting the amt. of the rent, in that Deed? or do you mean that it is not to be considered as an interlineation? My taking a Lease from Mrs. French of her life Estate, if she should be disposed to give me one, upon the paymt. of an annual rent, cannot be considered as a compliance on the part of Mr Dulany and discharge of that proviso which is to extinguish his Rent? [H.S.P.]

*To THOMAS JEFFERSON

Mount Vernon, February 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: I had the pleasure to find by the public Gazettes that your passage to France had been short, and pleasant. I have

no doubt but that your reception at Court has been equally polite, and agreeable.

I have the honor to inclose you the copy of an Act which passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland at the close of their respective Sessions; about the first of last month. The circumstances of these States, it is said, would not enable them to take the matter up, altogether, on public ground; but they have granted at the joint and equal expence of the two, 6666 2/3 dollars for the purpose of opening a road of communication between the highest navigation of the Potomac, and the river Cheat; and have concurred in an application to the State of Pensylvania for leave to open another road from Fort Cumberland or Wills Creek, to the Yohiogany, at the three forks, or Turkey foot.

Besides these joint Acts of the States of Virginia and Maryland; the former has passed a similar law respecting the navigation of James river, and its communications with the Green brier; and have authorized the Executive to appoint Commissioners, who shall carefully examine and fix on the most convenient course for a Canal from the Waters of Elizabeth River in this State, to those passing through the State of North Carolina; and report their proceedings therein, with an estimate of the expence necessary for opening the Same, to the next General Assembly; and in case they shall find that, the best course for such canal, will require the concurrence of the Sate [*sic*] of North Carolina in the opening thereof, they are further authorized and instructed to signify the same to the said State, and to concert with any person or persons who may be appointed on the part thereof, the most convenient and equitable plan for the execution of such work; and to report the result to the General Assembly.

With what Success the Books will be opened, I cannot, at this early stage of the business, inform you; in general the friends

of the measure are better stocked with good wishes than money; the former of which unfortunately, goes but a little way in works where the latter is necessary, and is not to be had. and yet, if this matter could be well understood, it should seem that, there would be no deficiency of the latter, any more than of the former; for certain I am, there is no speculation of which I have an idea, that will ensure such *certain* and *ample* returns of the money advanced, with a great, and encreasing interest, as the tolls arising from these navigations; the accomplishment of which, if funds can be obtained, admits of no more doubt in my mind, under proper direction, than that a ship with skilful Mariners can be carried from hence to Europe. What a misfortune therefore would it be, if a project which is big with such great political consequences, commercial advantages, and which might be made so productive to private Adventurers should miscarry; either from the inability of the two States to execute it, at the public expence, or for want of means, or the want of spirit or foresight to use them, in their citizens. Supposing a danger of this, do you think, Sir, the monied men of France, Holland, England or any other Country with which you may have intercourse, might be induced to become Adventurers in the Scheme? Or if from the remoteness of the object, this should appear ineligable to them, would they incline to lend money to one, or both of these States, if there should be a disposition in them to borrow, for this purpose? Or, to one or more individuals in them, who are able, and would give sufficient security for the repayment? At what interest, and on what conditions respecting time, payment of interest, &ca. could it be obtained?

I forsee such extensive political consequences depending on the navigation of these two rivers, and communicating them by short and easy roads with the waters of the Western territory, that I am pained by every doubt of obtaining the means for

their accomplishment: for this reason, I also wish you would be so obliging as to direct your enquiries after one or more characters, who have skill in this kind of work; that if Companies should be incorporated under the present Acts, and should incline to send to France, or England for an Engineer, or Man of practical knowledge in these kinds of works, there may be a clue to the application. You will perceive tho' my dear Sir, that no engagement, obligatory or honorary can be entered into at this time, because no person can answer for the determination of the Companies, admitting their formation.

As I have accustomed myself to communicate matters of difficulty to you, and have met forgiveness for it, I will take the liberty, my good Sir, of troubling you with the rehearsal of one more, which has lately occurred to me. Among the Laws of the last Session of our Assembly, there is an Act which particularly respects myself; and tho' very flattering, is also very embarrassing to me. This Act, after honorable, flattering, and delicate recitals, directs the treasurer of the State to Subscribe towards each of the Navigations fifty Shares for my use and benefit; which it declares, is to be vested in me and my heirs forever. It has ever been my wish, and it is yet my intention, never to receive any thing from the United States, or an individual State for any Services I have hitherto rendered, or which in the course of events, I may have it in my power to render them hereafter as it is not my design to accept of any appointment from the public, which might make emoluments necessary: but how to decline this act of generosity without incurring the imputation of disrespect to my Country, and a slight of her favors on the one hand, or that of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on the other, is the difficulty. As none of these have an existence in my breast, I should be sorry, if any of them should be imputed to me. The Assembly, as if determined that

I should not act from the first impulse, made this the last act of their Session; without my having the smallest intimation or suspicion of their generous intention. As our Assembly is now to be holden once a year only, I shall have time to hit upon some expedient that will enable me to indulge the bent of my own inclination, without incurring any of the imputations before mentioned; and of hearing the sentiments of my friends upon the subject; than whose, none would be more acceptable than yours.

Your friends in our Assembly will have been able to give you so much better information of what has passed there, and of the general state of matters in this Commonwealth, that a repetition from me is although unnecessary, and might be imperfect. If we are to credit News paper Accts. the flames of war are again kindled, or are about to be so, in Europe. None of the sparks, it is to be hoped will cross the Atlantic and touch the inflameable matter in these States. I pray you to believe that with sentimts. of great esteem, etc.[95]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: In a letter of old date, but lately received, from the Countess of Huntington, she refers me to a letter which her Ladyship says you obligingly undertook to forward to me:

[95] From the original in the *Jefferson Papers*.

Jefferson answered (July 10): "My wishes to see you made perfectly easy by receiving those just returns of gratitude from our country, to which you art entitled, would induce me to be contented with saying, what is a certain truth, that the world would be pleased with seeing them heaped on you, and would consider your receiving them as no derogation from your reputation. but I must own that the declining them will add to that reputation, as it will shew that your motives have been pure and without any alloy. this testimony however is not wanting either to those who know you or who do not. I must therefore repeat that I think the receiving them will not in the least lessen the respect of the world if from any circumstances they would be convenient to you. the candour of my communication will find its justification I know with you." Jefferson's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

never having received one from her to the purport she mentions, there can be no doubt but that this letter with your cover to it, have met the fate of some of mine to you; as I have wrote several within the last twelve or eighteen months, without any acknowledgement of them from you.

The only letters I recollect to have received from you since my retirement are dated the 9th. of Decr. 1783, and 10th. of June 1784. the first, relates to the heir of Mr. Bristons, the second, to a case with pictures, which you were so obliging as to commit to the care of the Revd. Mr. Bracken; and which has not yet got to hand. In Novr. last at Richmond, I happened in company with this gentleman who told me it was then in his possession at Wmsburgh, and that it should be forwarded by the first safe conveyance to this place, for your kind and polite attention in this matter, I pray you to receive my thanks.

As soon as your letter of the 9th. of Decr., above mentioned (accompanied by one from Mrs. Briston, and the memorial from the Excors of the Will of her deceased husband) came to my hands, I transmitted them to the Govr., who laid them before the Assembly which was then sitting: but what the result of it was, I have never yet heard, precisely. This case was involved in the general confiscation of British property, which makes discrimination difficult. How far the Law on national ground is just, or the expediency of it in the political scale, wise and proper, I will not undertake to determine; but of this I am well convinced, that the most wretched management of the sales has pervaded every State, without I believe a single exception in favor of any one of them.

I cannot at this moment recur to the contents of those letters of mine to you which I suspect have miscarried; further than that they were all expressive of an earnest wish to see you and Mrs. Fairfax once more fixed in this country; and to beg that

you would consider Mt. Vernon as your home until you could build with convenience, in which request Mrs. Washington joins very sincerely. I never look towards Belvoir, without having this uppermost in my mind. But alas! Belvoir is no more! I took a ride there the other day to visit the ruins, and ruins indeed they are. The dwelling house and the two brick buildings in front, underwent the ravages of the fire; the walls of which are very much injured: the other Houses are sinking under the depredation of time and inattention, and I believe are now scarcely worth repairing. In a word, the whole are, or very soon will be a heap of ruin. When I viewed them, when I considered that the happiest moments of my life had been spent there, when I could not trace a room in the house (now all rubbish) that did not bring to my mind the recollection of pleasing scenes, I was obliged to fly from them; and came home with painful sensations, and sorrowing for the contrast. Mrs. Morton[96] still lives at your Barn quarter. The management of your business is entrusted to one Muse (son to a Colonel of that name,[97] whom you cannot have forgotten), he is, I am told, a very active and industrious man; but in what sort of order he has your Estate, I am unable to inform you, never having seen him since my return to Virginia.

It may be and I dare say is presumed that if I am not returned to my former habits of life, the change is to be ascribed to a preference of ease and indolence to exercise and my wonted activity: But be assured my dear Sir, that at no period of the War have I been obliged myself to go thro' more drudgery in writing, or have suffered so much confinement to effect it, as since what is called my retirement to domestic ease and tranquillity. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I

[96] Wife of Rev. Andrew Morton.
[97] Col. George Muse.

have been able since I came home, to give very little attention to my own concerns, or to those of others, with which I was entrusted. My Accounts stand as I left them near ten years ago; those who owed me money, a very few instances excepted, availed themselves of what are called the tender Laws, and paid me off with a shilling and sixpence in the pound. Those to whom I owed, I have now to pay under heavy taxes with specie, or its equivalent value. I do not mention these matters by way of complaint, but as an apology for not having rendered you a full and perfect statement of the Acct. as it may stand between us, 'ere this. I allotted this Winter, supposing the drearyness of the season would afford me leisure to overhaul and adjust all my papers (which are in sad disorder, from the frequent hasty removals of them, from the reach of our trans-atlantic foes, when their Ships appeared): but I reckoned without my host; Company, and a continual reference of old military matters, with which I ought to have no concern; applications for Certificates of service &c., copies of orders and the Lord knows what besides, to which whether they are complied with or not, some response must be made, engross nearly my whole time. I am now endeavoring to get some person as a Secretary or Clerk to take the fatigueing part of this business off my hands. I have not yet succeeded, but shall continue my enquiries 'till one shall offer, properly recommended.

Nothing has occurred of late worth noticing, except the renewed attempts of the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland to improve and extend the navigation of the river Potomac as far as it is practicable, and communicating it by good roads (at the joint and equal expence of the two States) with the waters of the amazing territory behind us. A copy of this Act (exactly similar in both states) I do myself the honor to enclose you. One similar to it passed the Legislature of this State for improving

and extending the navigation of James river, and opening a good road between it and Green-briar. These acts were accompanied by another of the Virginia Assembly, very flattering and honorable for me, not more so for the magnitude of the gift, than the avowed gratitude, and delicacy of its expression, in the recital to it. The purport of it is, to vest 100 shares (50 in each navigation)[98] in me and my heirs forever. But it is not my intention to accept of it; altho', were I otherwise disposed, I should consider it as the foundation of the *greatest* and most *certain* income that the like sum can produce in any speculation whatever. So certain is the accomplishment of the work, if the sum proposed should be raised to carry it on, and so inconceivably will the tolls increase by the accumulating produce which will be water borne on the navigation of these two rivers, which penetrate so far and communicate so nearly, with the navigable waters to the Westward.

At the same time that I determine not to accept this generous and gratuitous offer of my Country, I am at a loss in what manner to decline it, without an apparent slight or disrespect to the Assembly on the one hand, or exposing myself to the imputation of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on the other, neither have an existence in my breast, and neither would I wish to have ascribed to me. I shall have time however to think of the matter, before the next session; for as if it was meant that I should have no opportunity to decline the offer at the *last,* it was the closing act thereof, without any previous intimation, or suspicion in my mind, of the intention. Admitting that Companies should be incorporated for the purposes mentioned in the Act, do you conceive my good Sir, that a person perfectly skilled in works of this sort, could be readily obtained from England? And upon what terms?

[98] See note to Washington's letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Feb. 15, 1785, *ante.*

It is unnecessary I persuade myself, to use arguments to convince Mrs. Fairfax and yourself, to the sincere regard and attachment and affection Mrs. Washington and I have for you both, or to assure you how much, I am, etc.

P. S. Do you think it would be in your power, with ease and convenience, to procure for me, a male and female Deer or two, the cost of transportation I would gladly be at. If I should ever get relieved from the drudgery of the pen, it would be my wish to engage in these kind of rural amusements, raising of shrubberies &c. After what I have said in the body of this letter, I will not trouble you with an apology for such a scrawl as it now exhibits, you must receive it, my good Sir, as we have done better things, better for worse.[99]

To THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

My Lady: The very polite and obliging letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 8th. of April by Sir James Jay, never came to my hands until the 17th. of last month, and is the best apology I can make for a silence, which might otherwise appear inattentive, if not disrespectful, to a correspondence which does me much honor.

The other letter which your Ladyship refers to, as having passed thro' the medium of our good friend Mr. Fairfax has never yet appeared; and it is matter of great regret, that letters are so often intercepted by negligence, curiosity or motives still more unworthy. I am persuaded that some of my letters to Mr. Fairfax, as well as his (covering your Ladyships) to me, have miscarried, as I have never received an acknowledgment of some of mine to him, tho' long since written.

[99] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

With respect to your humane and benevolent intentions towards the Indians, and the plan which your Ladyship has adopted to carry them into effect, they meet my highest approbation; and I should be very happy to find every possible encouragement given to them. It has ever been my opinion, since I have had opportunities to observe, and to reflect upon the ignorance, indolence and general pursuits of the Indians, that all attempts to reclaim, and introduce any system of religeon or morality among them, would prove fruitless, until they could be first brought into a state of greater civilization; at least that this attempt should accompany the other, and be enforced by example: and I am happy to find that it is made the ground work of your Ladyships plan.

With respect to the other parts of the plan, and the prospect of obtaining Lands for the Emigrants, who are to be the instruments employed in the execution of it, my letter to Sir James Jay in answer to his to me on this subject, will convey every information, which is in my power, at this time to give your Ladyship; and therefore I take the liberty of enclosing a transcript of it. Agreeably to the assurance given in it, I have written fully to the President of Congress, with whom I have a particular intimacy, and transmitted copies of your Ladyships plan, addresses and letter to the several States therein mentioned, with my approving sentiments thereon. I have informed him, that tho' it comes to him as a private letter from me; it is nevertheless optional in him to make it a matter of private communication to the members individually, or officially to Congress, as his judgment shall dictate; giving it as my opinion, among other reasons, that I did not believe since the cession of Lands by individual States to the United States, any one of them (except New York) was in circumstances, however well inclined it might be, to carry your Ladyships plan into effect.

What may be the result of your Ladyships Addresses to the States of North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York, individually; or of my statemt. of the matter in a friendly way to the President of Congress for the united deliberation of the whole, is not for me to anticipate, even were I acquainted with their sentiments. I have already observed, that neither of the States (unless Nw. York may be in circumstances to do it) can in my opinion furnish good Lands in a body for such emigrants as your Ladyship seems inclin'd to provide for. That Congress can, if the treaty which is now depending with the Western Indians should terminate favourably and a cession of Lands be obtained from them, which I presume is one object for holding it, is certain; and unless the reasons which I have mentioned in my letter to Sir James Jay should be a lot or bar, I have not a doubt but that they would do it; in which case, any quantity of Land (within such cession or purchase) might be obtained. If, ultimately, success should not attend any of these applications, I submit as a dernier resort, for your Ladyships information and consideration, a Gazette containing the terms upon which I have offered several tracts of Land (the quantity of my own in that country, and which lie as convenient to the Western Tribes of Indians as any in that territory (appertaining to an individual State), as your Ladyship may perceive by having recourse to Hutchins's Evans's, or any other map of that Country, and comparing the descriptive Lands therewith; and being informed that Virginia has ceded all her claim to lands No. West of the Ohio, to the United States, and that the Western boundary of Pennsylvania is terminate by a meridian which crosses the river but a little distance from Fort Pitt.

It will appear evident, from the date of my publication, that I could not at the time it was promulgated, have had an eye to your Ladyships plan of emigration; and I earnestly pray that

my communication of the matter at this time, may receive no other interpretation than what is really meant, that is, a last (if it should be thought an eligible) resort. I have no doubt but that Lands, if to be had at all, may be obtained from the United States, or an individual State, upon easier terms than those upon which I have offered mine; but being equally persuaded that these of mine, from their situation and other local advantages, are worth what I ask, I should not incline to take less for them, unless the *whole* by good and responsible characters (after an Agent in their behalf had previously examined into the quality and conveniency of the land) should be engaged upon either of the tenures that are published; especially as these Lands, from their particular situation, must become exceedingly valuable, by the Laws which have just passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland for improving and extending the navigation of Potomac, as high as is practicable, and communicating it with the nearest western waters by good roads: and by the former Assembly to do the same thing with James river, and the communication between it and the Great Kanhawa, by means of which the produce of the settlers on these Lands of mine, will come easily and cheaply to market. I am, etc.[1]

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 5th. enclosing the Act of the Legislature for vesting in me and my heirs, fifty shares in the navigation of each of the rivers Potomac and James.[2] For your trouble and attention in forwarding the Act, you will please to accept my

[1] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[2] The act is in the *Washington Papers* under date of Jan. 5, 1785.

thanks; whilst to the Assembly for passing it, these with all my gratitude, are due. I shall ever consider this Act as an unequivocal, and substantial testimony of the approving voice of my Country for the part I have acted in the Amn. theatre, and shall feast upon the recollection of it as often as it occurs to me; but this is all I can, or mean to do. It was my first declaration in Congress after accepting my military appointment, that I would not receive any thing for such services as I might be able to render the cause in which I had embarked. It was my fixed determination when I surrendered that appointment, never to hold any other office under Government, by which emolument might become a necessary appendage: or, in other words, which should withdraw me from the necessary attention which my own private concerns indispensably required: nor to accept of any pecuniary acknowledgment, for what had passed; from this resolution, my mind has never yet swerved. The Act therefore, which your Excellency enclosed, is embarrassing to me. On the one hand I shall be unhappy if my non-acceptance of the shares should be considered as a slight of the favor, (the magnitude of which, I think very highly of) or disrespectful to the generous intention of my Country. On the other I should be equally hurt if motives of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness should be ascribed to the action. None of these have existence in my breast, and none of them would I have imputed to me, whilst I am endulging the bent of my inclination by acting independant of rewards for occasional and accidental services. Besides, may not the plans be affected; unless some expedient can be hit upon to avoid the shock which may be sustained, by withdrawing so many shares from them?

Under these circumstances, and with this knowledge of my wishes and intention I would thank your Excellency for your

frank and full opinion of this matter, in a friendly way, as this letter to you is written and I hope will be considered. I am, etc.[3]

To MRS. HANNAH MOORE

Mount Vernon, February 28, 1785.

Madam: I received your favor of the 20th. of January, some considerable time after the date of it. I have never received, nor have I ever heard any thing of Mrs. Savages Will, since your deceased husband put it into my hands, and then reclaimed it in December 1783 as I passed through Baltimore on my way to Virginia, to be sent (for I could see no propriety in any thing else) to the Executors named therein, to act under. I am Madam Yr. etc.[3]

*To HENRY KNOX

Mount Vernon, February 28, 1785.

My dear Sir: Your favor of the 31st. Ulto. came to my hands by the last Post. enclosed are letters under flying Seals to Count de Rochambeau and the Marqs. de Chartellux (late Chevr.) introductory of Mr. Swan.[4] Also certificates for Lieutts. Seaver[5] and Henley.[6] if these will answer the purposes designed I shall think nothing of the trouble, but be happy in having given them.

[3] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[4] A member of the Massachusetts Legislature. Copies of Washington's notes of introduction to Rochambeau and Chastellux are in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*, dated Feb. 28, 1785.

[5] Lieut. James Sever (Seaver), of Jackson's Continental Regiment, in which he had served to June 20, 1784. He afterwards became a captain in the United States Navy, and in 1785 wished a certificate to aid him in obtaining a position in the Dutch service.

[6] Lieut. Samuel Henley. He is ranked as a captain in the Ninth Massachusetts Regiment, and was retired in January, 1783. He hoped to enter the Russian service.

Upon Summing up the cost of my projected building in Alexandria, I found my finances not equal to the undertaking; and have thereupon suspended, if not altogether declined it. Notwithstanding, if any Vessel should be coming hither from that part of your state where the Limestone abounds, and where it is to be obtained at a low price, and would bring it at a low freight, unburn'd. or if in this State it could be brought hither from Boston as Ballast, or at a low freight, I should be glad to get some; in either of these ways. I use a great deal of lime every year, made of the Oyster shells, which, before they are burnt, cost me 25 a [*sic*] 30/ pr. hundred Bushels; but it is of mean quality, which makes me desirious of trying Stone lime.

The Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland passed laws before their adjournment, for improving and extending the Navigation of this River as far as it shall be found practicable; a copy of which (for they are exactly the same in both States) I send you; they also gave a sum of money for the purpose of opening, and keeping in repair, a good road of communication between the Eastern and Western Waters. And this State passed a Similar Act respecting James River, and the Communication with Green Brier (a branch of the Great Kanhawa) which opens equally advantageously to another part of the Western territory; shares in either or both of which, in my opinion, presents a monied men the most certain, and lucrative Speculation of wch. I can have any idea.

The State of Virginia accompanied these proceedings with another Act, which particularly respected myself; and tho' generous in the extreme, is rendered more valuable by the flattering, yet delicate expression of its recitals. It directs their Treasurer to subscribe for my use and benefit, one hundred shares (50 in each Navigation); which it declares vested in me and my heirs for ever. But I can truly aver to you, my dear

Sir, that this Act has given me more pain than pleasure. It never was my inclination, nor is it now my intention, to accept anything pecuniary from the public: but how to decline this gift without appearing to slight the favors (which the assembly ascribe to a sense of gratitude) of my Country, and exhibiting an act of seeming disrespect to the Legislature on the one hand, or incurring the imputation of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on the other, is my embarrassment. but I must endeavor to hit upon some expedient before the next Session (for I had not the smallest intimation of the matter before the rising of the last) to avoid any of these charges, and yet follow the bent of my wishes; which are to be as independent as the Air. I have no body to provide for, and I have enough to support me through life in the plain, and easy style in which I mean to spend the remainder of my days.

I thank you for the particular acct. which you have given me of the different Rivers to which the British have given the names of St. Croix; I shall be much mistaken if they do not in other matters, as well as this, give us a good deal of trouble before we are done with them. and yet, it does not appear to me, that we have wisdom, or national policy enough to avert the evils which are impending. How should we, when contracted ideas, local pursuits, and absurd jealousy are continually leading us from those great and fundamental principles which are characteristic of wise and powerful Nations; and without which, we are no more than a rope of Sand, and shall as easily be broken.

In the course of your literary disputes at Boston (on the one side to drink Tea in Company, and to be social and gay, on the other, to impose restraints which at no time ever were agreeable, and in these days of more liberty and endulgence, never will be submitted to) I perceive, and was most interested by, something which was said respecting the composition for a

public walk; which also appeared to be one of the exceptionable things. Now, as I am engaged in works of this kind, I would thank you, if there is any art in the preparation, to communicate it to me. whether designed for Carriages, or walking. My Gardens have gravel walks (as you possibly may recollect) in the usual Style, but if a better composition has been discovered for these, I should gladly adopt it. the matter however which I wish principally to be informed in, is, whether your walks are designed for Carriages, and if so, how they are prepared, to resist the impression of the Wheels. I am making a serpentine road to my door, and have doubts (which it may be in your power to remove) whether any thing short of solid pavement will answer.

Having received a letter from Majr. Keith[7] (dated at New York) and not knowing where to direct my answer, I take the liberty of putting it and the Papers wch. it enclod under cover to you, as he was of the Massachusetts State, and I presume only came to New York on business. He is one, among numberless others, who want me to do inconsistent things. namely to annul, or rather do away, the effect of his Court Martial. The other letter[8] for a Mr. Palmer, be so good as to put into a channel for delivery.

Mrs. Washington joins me in affectionate regards for Mrs. Knox, and the rest of the Family, and I am etc. [MS. H. S.]

To JAMES KEITH[9]

Mount Vernon, March 1, 1785.

Sir: However much I may wish to see every slur wiped from the character of an officer who early embarked in the

[7] Maj. James Keith.
[8] A draft or copy not now found in the *Washington Papers*.
[9] Formerly major in the Eighth Massachusetts Regiment.

service of his Country; and however desirous I may be to alleviate his misfortunes, it is nevertheless incumbent on me to have regard to consistency of conduct in myself. With what propriety then could I, a private Citizen, attempt to undo things which received my approbation as a public officer, and this too without the means of information, as the proceedings of Courts Martial are not with me: but if the case was otherwise, I could neither answer it to myself or Country, to retread the ground I have laboriously passed over, was a door of this kind once opened, I should be overwhelmed with applications of a similar nature; for I cannot agree that either the judgment of the Court Martial, or the approbation of it proceeded, as you suppose, from the policy of offering a victim to appease the clamors of the populace. It is unnecessary however to go into arguments upon the subject when, admitting there was error, redress can only be had from the supreme Council of the nation, or to the State to which you belong. I am sorry it has been your lott to be brought before a Court, much more so for the issue, and if I could with propriety place you in the full enjoyment of every thing you wish, I shou'd have pleasure in doing it, but it is not in my power in the present instance. I am, etc.[10]

To CHARLES McIVER

Mount Vernon, March 1, 1785.

Sir: Whilst I was at Richmond in November last, I received a letter and extracts from you on the subject of emigration. It was put into my hands at a time when I was much engaged, accompanied by many other papers, which with them were put by and forgotten, until your second letter reminded me

[10] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

of them. As I do not clearly comprehend your plan, and if I did, as a discussion of it by letter would be tedious and less satisfactory, if you will be at the trouble of calling upon me at any time when I am in Alexandria, or of riding down here; I will give you my sentiments with freedom and candour, when I more fully understand it. I am, etc.[11]

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Since my last to you, I have been favored with several of your letters, which should not have remained so long unacknowledged, had I not been a good deal pressed by matters which could not well be delayed; and because I found a difficulty in complying with your request respecting the profiles; the latter it is not in my power to do now, satisfactorily. Some imperfect miniature cuts I send you under cover with this letter, they were designed for me by Miss D'Hart of Elizabethtown, and given to Mrs. Washington; who in sparing them, only wishes they may answer your purpose. For her I can get none cut yet. If Mr. Du' Simitire is living, and at Philada., it is possible he may have miniature engravings of most, if not all the military characters you want, and in their proper dresses: he drew many good likenesses from the life, and got them engraved at Paris for sale; among these I have seen Genl. Gates, Baron de Steuben, &c., as also that of your hble servt. The Marqs. de la Fayette had left this before your request of his profile came to hand.

You ask if the character of Colo. John Lawrens, as drawn in the Independant Chronicle of the 2d of Decr. last, is just. I answer, that such parts of the drawing as have fallen under my own observation, is literally so; and that it is my firm

[11] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

belief his merits and worth richly entitle him to the whole picture: no man possessed more of the amor patriœ, in a word, he had not a fault that I ever could discover, unless intrepidity bordering upon rashness could come under that denomination; and to this he was excited by the purest motives.

The order[12] alluded to in my private letter, a copy of which you requested, I now send. You might have observed, for I believe the same private letter takes notice thereof, that it was consequent of a resolve of Congress, that Fort Washington was so pertinaceously held, before the Ships passed that Post. Without unpacking chests, unbundling papers &ca., I cannot come at to give you a copy of that resolve; but I well remember that after reciting the importance of securing the upper navigation of the Hudson, I am directed to obtain hulks, to sink them for the purpose of obstructing the navigation, and to spare no other cost to effect it. Owing to this the Posts of Forts Washington and Lee, on account of the narrowness of the river, some peculiarity of the channel, and strength of the ground at these places, were laboriously fortified; owing to this we left Fort Washington strongly garrisoned, in our rear, when we were obliged to retreat to the White plains; and owing to this, also, Colo. Magaw, who commanded at it, was ordered to defend it to the last extremity. But when, maugre all the obstructions which had been thrown into the channel, all the labour and expence wch. had been bestowed on the works, and the risks we had run of the garrison theretofore, the British Ships of War had, and could pass those Posts, it was clear to me from that moment, that they were no longer eligible, and that that on the East side of the river ought to be withdrawn whilst it was in our power: in consequence thereof

[12] See Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, Nov. 8, 1776 (vol. 6, p. 257). (See also Washington's letter to John Augustine Washington, Nov. 6, 1776, p. 244, of the same volume.)

the letter of the 8th. of Novr. 1776, was written to Genl. Greene from the White plains; that Post and all the troops in the vicinity of it being under his orders. I give this information, and I furnish you with a copy of the order for the evacuation of Fort Washington, because you desire it, not that I want to exculpate myself from any censure which may have fallen on me by charging another. I have sent your recipe for the preservation of young plants to the Alexandria printer; and wish the salutary effect which the author of the discovery, in the annual register has pointed to, may be realized: the process is simple and not expensive which renders it more valuable.

Some Accots. say, that matters are in train for an accommodation between the Austrians and Dutch; if so the flames of war may be arrested before they blaze out and become very extensive; but admitting the contrary, I hope none of the sparks will light on American ground, which I fear is made up of too much combustible matter for its well-being.

Your young friend[13] is in high health, and as full of spirits as an egg shell is of meat. I informed him I was going to write to you, and desired to know if he had any commands; his spontaneous answer, I beg he will make haste and come here again. All the rest of the family are well, except Mrs. Washington, who is too often troubled with bilious and cholicky complaints, to enjoy perfect health; all join in best wishes for you and yours with Dr. Sir, &c.[14]

To REVEREND JOHN WITHERSPOON

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1785.

Revd. Sir: From the cursory manner in wch. you expressed the wish of Mr. Bowie[15] to write the Memoirs of my life, I was

[13] George Washington Parke Custis.
[14] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[15] John Bowie.

not, at the moment of your application and my assent to it, struck with the consequences to which it tended: but when I came to reflect upon the matter afterwards, and had had some conversation with Mr. Bowie on the subject; I found that this must be a very futile work (if under *any* circumstances it could be made interesting) unless he could be furnished with the incidents of my life, either from my papers, or my recollection, and digesting of past transactions into some sort of form and order with respect to times and circumstances: I knew also that many of the former relative to the part I had acted in the war between France and G: Britain from the year 1754, until the peace of Paris; and which contained some of the most interesting occurrences of my life, were lost; that my memory is too treacherous to be relied on to supply this defect, and admitting both were more perfect, that submitting such a publication to the world whilst I continue on the theatre, might be ascribed (however involuntarily I was led into it) to vain motives.

These considerations prompted me to tell Mr. Bowie, when I saw him at Philada. in May last, that I could have no agency towards the publication of any Memoirs respecting myself whilst living: but as I had given my assent to you (when asked) to have them written, and as he had been the first to propose it, he was welcome if he thought his time would not be unprofitably spent, to take extracts from such documents as yet remained in my possession, and to avail himself of any other information I could give; provided the publication should be suspended until I had quitted the stage of human action. I then intended, as I informed him, to have devoted the present expiring winter in arranging all my papers which I had left at home, and which I found a mere mass of confusion (occasioned by frequently shifting them into trunks, and suddenly

removing them from the reach of the enemy); but however strange it may seem it is nevertheless true, that what with company; referrences of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled, applications for certificates, and copies of orders, in addition to the routine of letters which have multiplied greatly upon me; I have not been able to touch a single paper, or transact any business of my own, in the way of accts. and during the whole course of the winter; or in a word, since my retirement from public life.

I have two reasons, my good sir, for making these communications to you, the first is, by way of apology for not complying with my promise in the full extent you might expect, in favor of Mr. Bowie. The second is, not knowing where that Gentleman resides I am at a loss without your assistance, to give him the information respecting the disordered state of my papers, which he was told should be arranged, and a proper selection of them made for his inspection, by the Spring. Upon your kindness therefore I must rely to convey this information to him; for tho' I shou'd be glad at all times, to see Mr. Bowie here, I should be unhappy if expectations which cannot be realized (in the present moment) shou'd withdraw him from, or cause him to forego some other pursuits which may be more advantageous to him. My respects if you please to Mrs. Witherspoon. I have the honor, etc.[16]

To JOHN FILSON

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It was but a few days ago that I was favor'd with your letter of the 8th. of Feby. accompanied by your Map and history of Kentucke, for which you will please to accept my

[16] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

thanks. Those which you expect were handed to me by Mr. Page[17] of Rosewell, are not yet arrived; nor have I heard anything from that gentleman respecting them.

Previous to the receipt of the above letter, I had written to you and addressed my letter to the care of Mr. Dunlap printer in Phila., taking it for granted you must have received it 'ere this, I beg leave to refer to its contents, as aught I could say on this subject would be only repetition. I am, etc.[18]

To MRS. SARAH BOMFORD

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Madam: I have had the honor to receive your favor, and duplicate, of the 8th. of Octor. from Lisle in Flanders. I have also seen the Will of the deceased Mrs. Savage.

In December 1783 on my quitting public life, and as I was returning to my own home; I met at Baltimore, in Maryland a Mr. Moore, who shewed me this Will; and as it appeared to be the original (for I perfectly recollected the writing of Mrs. Savage), I told him it ought to have been placed in the hands of the Executors therein named, that it might be recorded and acted upon, instead of bringing it to this Country, and proposed to transmit it to them myself for this purpose: he placed it in my hands accordingly, but in less than half an hour reclaimed it; adding that as he was about to sail for Ireland, he would take it there himself. As I knew not by what means he became possessed of this testament, I knew no right by which I could withhold it from him, and therefore returned it; with a request that he would furnish me with a copy thereof, which was done some considerable time thereafter. From that

[17] John Page.
[18] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

period I heard nothing further of Mr. Moore, the Will or anything respecting it, until last month; when I received a letter dated Jan: 20th. 1785, from a person at Baltimore subscribing herself, "Hannah Moore", of which the enclosed is a copy, upon the receipt whereof I informed the writer, that neither the Will, or any accot. of it, had reached my hands; nor had I heard a tittle of it since.

I confess there is something in this transaction which carries with it the face of mistery. How it should have happened that Mr. Moore whose name is not once mentioned in the will should become possessed of it: that his widow should be enquiring after it, with the eagerness of a person deeply interested therein; and that the Executors, who *really* are so, first as *principal* legatees, and 2dly. as *residuary* Legatees, shou'd never have written a line on the subject, or made the most distant enquiry after the only property from whence they could derive benefit themselves, or administer it to others agreeably to the testators directions, is unaccountable to me upon any other principle, than that of the Will's never having yet got into their hands.

After assuring you Madam, that I should be happy to render you any services my situation will admit of; I must beg leave to inform you, that you mistake the case entirely, when you suppose that it is in my power to dispose of any part of the deceased Mrs. Savage's property. All that her Trustees could have done, even in her lifetime; was to recover the annuity, which was as unjustly, as ungenerously withheld from her by Doctr. Savage her husband: but with respect to the disposal of it afterwards, we had no more authority than you: now she has made an absolute distribution of it herself by Will, which her Executors herein named, are to see duly executed. Every lawful and equitable claim therefore, which you may

have had against Mrs. Savage in her lifetime, must now be presented to her Executors; for it is they, and they only, (or the Laws if they refuse) who can now do you justice. From the words of the Will it would seem to me that the legacy which Mrs. Savage has left you, does not preclude any just charge you may have had against her for board &c., if it was known to be your intention to make it: but this is a matter of which I have not the smallest cognizance, it must be settled between you and the Exors of her Will, when the money can be recover'd from the Estate of Doctr. Savage, who is also dead.

In what state the Suit is, I am unable to inform you. My situation before Peace was established, and engagements since have obliged me to depend wholly upon Mr. Fairfax[19] (the other Trustee) to prosecute it; who, besides the shutting of the Courts at one time, and the litigiousness of them at all times, has had all the villainy of Dr. Savage, and the chicanery of his lawyers to combat. The Doctr., rather than fulfill an engagement, which generosity, justice, humanity and every other motive which should have influenced an honest mind, had recourse to stratagem, and every delay, to procrastinate payment; altho' from report, he has made an immense fortune. I have the honor, etc.[20]

To MATHEW CAREY

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It was my intention, so soon as I understood you meant to become the publisher of a Newspaper at Philadelphia, to have requested that your weekly production might be sent to me. I was the more pleased with this determination when,

[19] Bryan Fairfax.
[20] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

by a letter from my friend the Marqs. de la Fayette, I found he had interested himself in your behalf.

It has so happened that my Gazettes from Philada., whether from inattention at the printing or post offices, or other causes, come very irregularly to my hands; I pray you therefore to fold it like, and give it the appearance of a letter, the usual covering of your Newspapers will do. I have sometimes suspected that there are persons who having stronger desires to read Newspapers than to pay for them, borrow with a pretty heavy hand: this may be avoided by deception, and I know of no other way. I am, etc.[21]

To FREDERICK WEISSENFELS

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: I was favored with your letter of the 21st. of Feby., by the last Post. It never fails to give me pain when I hear of the sufferings of a deserving Officer; in which light I always considered you. It ever has been amongst my first wishes, that the circumstances of the public had been such as to have prevented the great loss which both officers and Soldiers have sustained by the depreciation of their certificates; and that each State would do something for those of their respective lines: but having many to provide for, and few places or things to bestow; it is a matter of little wonder that many, very many, deserving characters should go unnoticed, or, to speak more properly, unprovided for.

It has ever been a maxim with me, and it gives regularity and weight to my certificates, to ground them upon the testi-

[21] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The text of the original, said to be in Worcester College, Ohio, varies somewhat from this letter, the last sentence being "It has sometimes occurred to me, that there are persons who wishing to read News Papers, without being at the expence of paying for them, make free with those which are addressed to others. Under the garb of a letter, it is not presumeable this liberty would be taken."

mony of the Genl. officers under whom the applicant had served: this brings with it dates and circumstances with which I am oftentimes unacquainted. In your case it is indispensably necessary; for you having been long out of the Continental line of the army, I cannot speak with precision as to facts. If therefore, as you have been in the service of the State of Nw. York you will forward to me the testimonial of Govr. Clinton, I will gladly accompany it with a certificate of mine, if you think any weight can be added thereby; to do which can only be attended with a little delay, as the letters will come and go free from Postage. With esteem and regard, I am etc.[22]

To JACOB GERHARD DIRIKS

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th. of January came duly at hand; but being written in French (a language I do not understand) some time elapsed before an opportunity presented to get it translated. This I hope will be received as an apology for the delay of my answer.

However much your merits deserve recommendation, and however pleasing it might be to me to offer my testimony to such facts as have come to my knowledge, respecting the services you have rendered to these States, yet to comply with your request of a letter to the Count de Maasdam,[23] would be inconsistent with the line of conduct I have prescribed for my Government.

It is a maxim with me Sir, to take no liberties with exalted characters to whom I am not personally known, or with whom I have had no occasion to correspond by letter; but if you shou'd think a certificate of service from me can avail you in

[22] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[23] General in the army of the United Netherlands.

any degree, and you would please to furnish me with your appointmts. and places of services (as they have not been much under my immediate command) I shall have pleasure in furnishing one.

If circumstances had permitted, I should have been happy in the honor of a visit from you. I have a grateful sense of the polite and flattering expression of your letters; and with best wishes for you in your future pursuits, I have the honor etc.[24]

To ARTHUR LEE

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I had the honor to receive a letter from you dated at Carlisle the 19th. of Novr. last, which should not have remained unacknowledged until this time, if I had known of any opportunity of addressing a letter to you in the Western Territory.

I have now heard of your passing thro' Philada. on your way to Congress, and have been honor'd with a copy of your second treaty with the Western tribes of Indians, from the President. I am pleased to find that the Indians have yielded so much; from the temper I heard they were in, I apprehended less compliance, on their part. This business being accomplished, it would give me pleasure to hear that Congress had proceeded to the disposal of the ceded Lands at a happy medium price, in a District sufficient and proper for a compact State. Progressive seating will be attended with many advantages; sparse settlements with many evils.

I congratulate you on your safe return: the season was inclement and very unfit for the place and business you were engaged in. Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you, and I have the honor, etc.[24]

[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To HUGH WILLIAMSON

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Sir: It has so happened, that your favor of the 19th. Ulto. did not come to my hands until the last mail arrived at Alexandria. By the return of which, I have the honor to address this letter to you.

Mr. McMeiken's explanation of the movements of Rumseys's newly invented Boat, is consonant to my ideas; and warranted by the principles upon which it acts. The small manual assistance to which I alluded, was to be applied in still water; and to the purpose of steering the vessel. The counteraction being proportioned to the action, it must ascend a swift currt. faster than a gentle stream; and both, with more ease than it can move on dead water. But in the first there may be, and no doubt is, a point beyond wch. it cannot proceed without involving consequences which may be found insurmountable. Further than this I am not at liberty to explain myself; but if a model, or thing in miniature can justly represent a greater object in its operation, there is no doubt of the utility of the invention. A view of this model, with an explanation, removed the principal doubt I ever had in my mind, of the practicability of progressing against stream, by the aid of mechanical Power; but as he wanted to avail himself of my introduction of it to the public attention, I chose, previously, to see the actual performance of the model in a descending stream, before I passed my certificate, and having done so, *all* my doubts were done away.

I thank you, Sir, for your accot. of the last Indian treaty. I had received a similar one before, but do not comprehend by what line it is, our northern limits are to be fixed. Two things seem naturally to result from this Treaty. The terms on which

the ceded lands are to be disposed of; and the mode of settling them. The first, in my opinion, ought not to be delayed. The second, ought not to be too diffusive. Compact and progressive Seating will give strength to the Union; admit law and good government; and fœderal aids at an early period. Sparse settlements in *several* new States; or in a large territory for one State, will have the direct contrary effects. and whilst it opens a large field to Land jobbers and speculators, who are prouling about like Wolves in every shape, will injure the real occupants and useful citizens, and consequently, the public interest. If a tract of Country, of convenient size for a new State, contiguous to the present Settlements on the Ohio, is laid off, and a certain proportion of the land therein actually seated; or at least granted; before any other State is marked out and no lond suffered to be had beyond the limits of it; we shall, I conceive, derive great political advantages from such a line of conduct, and without it, may be involved in much trouble and perplexity, before any New state will be well organized, or can contribute any thing to the support of the Union. I have the honor &c. [N.Y.H.S.]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's favor of the 14th. of Feby., and pray you to receive my thanks for the copy of the treaty with the Western Indians, with which you were so obliging as to send me. From the accots. given me of the temper of these people were in last fall I did not expect such a cession of territory from the Tribes that met. The Shawnese are pretty numerous and among the most warlike of the Ohio Indians; but if the other tribes are in earnest and will

observe the Treaty and a third treaty is concluded with the more southerly Indians, their spirit must yield, or they could easily be extirpated.

The wisdom of Congress will now be called upon to fix a medium price on these Lands, and to point out the most advantageous mode of seating them; so as that Law and good Governmt. may be administered and the Union strengthened and supported thereby. Progressive seating in my opinion is the only means by which this can be effected; and unless in the scale of politics, more than one new State is found necessary at this time, the unit I believe would be found more pregnant with advantages than the decies; the latter, if I mistake not, will be more advancive of individual interest, than the public welfare. As you will have that untowardness, jealousy and pride, which are characteristic of the Spanish nation, to contend with; it is more than probable that Mr. Gardoque[25] will give Congress a good deal of trouble respecting the navigation of the Mississippi river. To me it should seem, that their true policy would lie in making New Orleans a free mart, instead of shutting the port, but their ideas of trade are very limitted. I take the liberty of putting a letter under your cover for Mr. Lee.[26] Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments, and I am etc.[27]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, March 19, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Some considerable time ago I wrote a letter to my nephew, Bushrod Washington, and used the freedom of

[25] Diego de Gardoqui. He was Spanish envoy to the United States.
[26] Arthur Lee.
[27] This "Letter Book" copy varies considerably from the text printed by Ford, who does not state his source.

addressing it to your care. At that time I conceived he was living at Richmond, but the establishment of circuit Courts it seems has changed his plan: he now intends to live at Fredericksburg. Will you allow me the liberty my dear sir, to request the favor of you to open my letter to him, if it is yet in yr. possession, and comply with a request therein, respecting a promisary note of Mr. Rian's,[28] if he is in Richmond; or cause it to be complied with if he is at Petersburgh. If my memory serves me, I have gone into the detail of the matter to my nephew. I will not trouble you therefore, with a repetition of it, nor will I take up your time with an apology for the trouble this must give you. Mrs. Washington unites in best wishes for yourself and Mr. Randolph with, Dr. Sir, &c.[29]

To JOHN HARVIE

Mount Vernon, March 19, 1785.

Sir: If I recollect right, I mentioned when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Mr. Jones's[30] the first of last October, that I was reduced to the necessity of bringing ejectments against sundry persons who had taken possession of a tract of Land which I hold, not far from Fort Pitt in the State of Pennsylvania, by Patent under this Governmt. for 2813 acres.

I have lately received a letter from my Lawyer, Mr. Thos. Smith, of Carlisle requesting information on several points; the following are his own words,

I am entirely unacquainted with the manner in which titles to Lands are acquired by improvement or occupancy, by the Laws and customs of Virginia. I suppose it must be under certain conditions and restrictions. I should be glad to have the Laws, if any, pointed out. Does the occupier

[28] Ryan. (See Washington's letter to Bushrod Washington, Jan. 22, 1785, *ante.*)
[29] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[30] Gabriel Jones, in the Shenandoah Valley.

Forfeit his right of pre-emption, if he does not apply for an office right in a given time? If so, when? By what Laws? Or is it by the regulations established in the Land Office? A certified copy of such regulations if any, may be necessary.

At the interview I had with that Gentleman in September, he told me it would be necessary to obtain a certified copy of the Surveyors return to the Land office, and of the date of the Warrt. upon which it was made. The latter I presume is in the hands of the Surveyor, but the date no doubt, is recited in the return. Having (in the life time of Colo. Crawford, and by letter from him) received information that at the convention next before the 20th. of Septr. 1776, (the date of his letter) an ordinance passed for the purpose of saving equitable claims to the Western Lands, Mr. Smith requested some precise information respecting this Ordinance, that is, how far it will apply in my case.

After the many obliging acts of kindness I have received from you, and the generous terms upon which they have been rendered, I am really ashamed to give you more trouble; but as the dispute in which I am engaged is of importance, and a very ungenerous advantage has been taken of a situation in which I could not attend to my private concerns, or seek justice in due season, and as I believe no person can solve the queries of Mr. Smith, and give such accurate information on such points as can be made to subserve my cause as you, I am, however reluctantly, compelled to this application.

Mr. Smith's own words, which I have quoted, and his verbal application to me, wch. I have just now recited, will sufficiently apprize you of what has occurred to him; but I will go further, and take the liberty my good Sir, of giving you a state of the whole matter; from whence you will discover the points on which my opponents mean to hinge the success of their cause.

Colo. Crawford, a liver on Yohioghaney, an old and intimate acquaintance of mine, undertook to procure for me a tract of land in that Country; and accordingly made choice of the one, now in dispute, on the waters of Racoon and Millers runs, branches of Shurtees Creek, surveyed the same, amounting to 2813 acres, and purchased in my behalf the claim of some person to a part of the land, who pretended to have a right thereto. After this he built, or intended to build according to his own accot., and to the best of my recollection, (for the papers being in the hands of my Lawyer, I have memory only, and that a bad one, to resort to) three or four cabbins on different parts of the tract, and placed one or more persons thereon to hold possession of it for my benefit. All this preceeded the first view the present occupiers (my opponents) ever had of the Land, as they themselves have acknowledged to *me*, and which I believe can be proved. So far as it respects one cabbin there can be *no* doubt, because it remains to this day; and is acknowledged by them to have been on the land when they first came to it. They built another cabbin so close to the door of it, as to preclude the entrance of it: Crawford in his accot. of it to me, says, with a view to prevent occupation: they, on the other hand, say there was no inhabitant in the house at the time. Both may be right, for the fact is, as I have been informed, the owner being from home, this transaction took place in his absence.

It may be well to observe here that Colo. Crawford was only acting the part of a friend to me; for at that time, tho' he was a Surveyor by regular appointment from the College of Wm. and Mary, it was for the local purpose of surveying the 200,000 acres granted by Dinwiddie's Proclamation of 1754 to the Troops of the State, who were entitled to it as a bounty: but as I proposed to cover this survey with a military warrant as

soon as circumstances would permit, these steps were preliminary to obtain the Land. Accordingly, a Warrant which I obtained in consequence of a purchase from one Captain Posey (who under the British Kings proclamation of 1763 was entitled to 3000 acres) whose Bond I now have bearing date the 14th. of Octr. 1770, assigning to me all his right to land under it, was located thereon; and Colo. Crawford, after receiving a commission to act as Deputy to Mr. Thos. Lewis, made a return of this survey to his principal, who returned it to the Secretary's office, from whence a Patent issued signed by Lord Dunmore in June or July 1774, for 2813 acres, reciting under what right I became entitled to the Land. Hence, and from the repeated warnings, which it is said can be proved were given at the time my opponents were about to take possession of the Land, and afterwards, comes my title.

The title of my opponents I know will be: 1st. That Crawfords survey was illegal, at least, was unauthorized. 2d. That being a great land-jobber, he held, or endeavored to monopolise under one pretence or other much land: and tho' (for they do not deny the fact *to me* in private discussion, altho' considering the lapse of time, deaths, and dispersion of people, I may find some difficulty to prove it) they were told this was my land; yet conceiving my name was only made use of as a cover, and in this they say they were confirmed, having (after some of the warnings given them) searched the Land office of this State without discovering any such Grant to me. 3d. That their possession of the Land, preceded my Patent or date of the Surveyors return to the Secretary's office; or even the date of Crawfords deputation under Lewis, before which, every transaction they will add, was invalid.

But to recapitulate, the Dispute, if my memory for want of papers does not deceive me, may be summed up in these words.

1st. In the year 1771, Crawford at my request looked out this Land for me, and made an actual survey thereof on my account.

2d. Some person (not of the opponents) setting up a claim to part included by the survey, he purchased them out, built one cabbin, if not more, and placed a man therein to keep possession of the Land.

3d. It was called my land, and generally believed to be so by every body, and under that persuasion was left by some, who uninformed of my right, had begun to build, before the present occupants took possession to the exclusion as I have related before of the person placed thereon by Crawford.

4th. That sometime in Octr. 1773 according to their own accot., these occupants took possession.

5th. That upon their doing so, and at several times thereafter, they were notified of my claim and intention to assert my right.

6th. That no survey was ever made of this Land, but the first one by Crawford.

7th. That it is declared in the Surveyors return, to be consequent of a warrant granted by Lord Dunmore to Jno. Posey assigned to me. But whether this warrt. is dated before or after possession was taken by my opponents, I know not, but the Survey will shew this.

8th. That after he received his deputation (which I believe was subsequent to their occupancy) he made a return of the survey to Mr. Lewis, who returned it to the Secretary's Office in the early part, I believe, of the year 1774, and a Patent issued without any caveat or opposition from these people.

9th. I believe, because I never heard otherwise, that no office rights either in this State or that of Pennsylvania, were ever obtained by my opponents, resting their title upon possession.

Under this statement of the matter, in which I have conceded everything I know, or which I think can be urged against my claim, I would thank you, as the matter will be determined in another State, for such advice and information of Acts of Assembly, Acts of Convention, or rules of office which make to the point, as my long absence renders me quite an ignoramus in these matters, and as unfit for, as I am disinclined to controversies of this kind.

If pre-occupancy will take place of legal right, under the circumstances here mentioned; it remains still a question how far the possession and improvements which were made in my behalf, previous to those of my opponents, will avail me; that is, under what title I should then claim the Land, and under that title how much of it I should hold, supposing one Cabbin only to have been built and occupied, by any rule of Office, or Act of Government.

When I look back at the length of this letter, and consider how much trouble I am giving you, I must thro myself upon your goodness for an apology, whilst I assure you of the esteem and regard with which I am, etc.[31]

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, March 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I regret very much that your letters of the 2d. and 13th. of Octr. should have been withheld from me until this time, the last post only, from Richmond brought them to me.

If you should have fulfilled your intention of embarking for this Continent at the early period proposed in the first of these letters, (and I hope no untoward accident has intervened to prevent it) this answer will come too late, and my silence

[31] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

will leave you in doubt respecting Horses, besides carrying with it the appearance of inattention. As there is a possibility however that this letter may yet find you in Ireland, I will relate the mode of travelling in this Country, and submit to your own judgment the propriety of depending on it, or bringing Saddle or Carriage horses with you.

From the Southern parts of this State, say from Norfolk, thro' Hampton, Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Alexandria which is within a few miles of this place, there is a regular Stage which passes thrice every week, it is neither of the best or worst kind. From Alexandria thro' the Metropolis of every State, Annapolis in Maryland excepted, which is a little to the right of the post road which goes thro' Baltimore. There is also a regular Stage to Portsmouth in New Hampshire, they are of a similar kind, and pass as often as those first mentioned; so that not more than three intervening days can happen between one Stage day and another. A person may therefore, at any time between the first of April and first of December, travel from Richmond (the metropolis of this State) to Boston, in ten or twelve days; and return in the same time. Between this State and Charleston (So. Carolina) no Stages are as yet established, and the Country for the most part being poor and thinly inhabited, accommodations of every kind, I am told are bad. So much for public convenience; and I do not think I should deceive you *much,* was I to add that Sir Edwd. Newenham would find no difficulty to get accommodated, in this and some other States, with the horses and carriages of private gentlemen, from place to place where inclination or business might induce him to go.

What the expence of transporting horses to this country would be, I am unable to say; but I conceive they would not be fit for immediate use if they were brought if the voyage should

be long, but at the same time that I deliver this opinion, I must add another, viz: that if you should bring horses, and might not incline to take them back again, you could, if they were young, likely and well bought, always sell them for their original cost and the charges of transportation; especially if they should happen to be of the female kind.

I have not had the pleasure of seeing either Mr. Rutherford or Capt. Boyle:[32] but the latter accompanied your letters and packages (for which I pray you to accept my thanks) with a few lines, giving reasons for their detention, and information of his sailing in the course of a few days. I have in haste, wrote you this letter by return of the Post, hoping it may get to Richmond time enough to receive the conveyance by the Jane and Diana, that it may repeat to you if it should arrive in time, the pleasure I shall have in seeing you and your fellow travellers under my roof, and paying you and them every attention in my power.

As the chances are against this letter's finding you in Ireland, I will not at this time, touch upon the other parts of your several favors, but leaving them as matters for oral converse, beg that my respectful compliments in which Mrs. Washinton joins may be presented to Lady Newenham. With very great esteem, etc.[33]

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, March 27, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Stone gave me your favor of the 20th. When I had the pleasure of seeing you at this place, I informed you

[32] Capt. John Boyle, jr.

[33] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On March 20 Washington wrote briefly to Gov. Patrick Henry, forwarding this letter to Newenham, a copy of which is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

fully and truly of my want of money. I am at this moment paying 7 pr. Ct. interest for a pretty considerable sum which I borrowed in the State of Nw. York, thro' means of the Govr.; and not being able to obtain a surety of holding it for more than one year from the establishment of peace, I am in continual fear, notwithstanding the high interest, of having it called in.

After this declaration, it is unnecessary to add how acceptable it would be to me to receive payment of the money due to me from the Estate of your Father, or part of it: but to take it in small driblets from the hands of your Lawyers, would not answer the purpose as it is more than *one* considerable payment I have to make from this fund. If you should go to Congress, I should be glad if the money arising from the arrangement you have made, was order'd into the hands of your brother, or your attorney here; and *he* directed to pay it to me in such sums as I could apply in discharge of my own Debts; for the fact is, I shall receive with one hand and pay with the other, if I may be allowed to use the phrase, (but for which, it would not be required from you). If you do not go to Congress, I shall expect the same from yourself.

My compliments, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Mrs. Mercer. I am, etc.[34]

To JOHN CRAIG

Mount Vernon, March 29, 1785.

Sir: If I could give you any useful information on the subject of your letter to me, I would do it with pleasure; but, altho' I have a good general knowledge of the Western Country, I am very little acquainted with local situations, and less with those on the Susquehanna than any other. Monongahela, of which

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Cheat river is a branch, is gentle in its current, easy of navigation, and besides, is supposed, either by the Cheat, or the Yohioganey (which is another branch of it) to approach nearest to, and to afford the best communication or portage with the Atlantic waters of any in all that extensive territory: consequently seats thereon, from this circumstance alone, must be valuable; but the quality of the Land is inferior to none, until you penetrate much further to the Westward, or much lower down the Ohio; and is besides much better settled than any part of the country beyond the Alleghaney Mountains. Upon what terms you could buy (to rent I presume you are not inclined, or the difficulty might be less) a Seat having such conveniences as you want, I am unable to inform you. The prices of Land there are rising every day, and if the plan which is now in contemplation for extending the navigation of the Potomac and opening roads of communication short and easy, between it and the waters above mentioned, should be effected, of which I have no doubt, the price will increase much faster.

My complimts. and best wishes to Mrs. Craig, I am, etc.[35]

To LUCRETIA WILHEMINA VAN WINTER

Mount Vernon, March 30, 1785.

Madam: The honor which your pen has done me so far exceeds my merits, that I am at a loss for words to express my sense of the compliment it conveys.

The Poem,[36] in celebration of my exertions to establish the rights of my Country, was forwarded to me from Philada. by Mr. Vogels; to whom I should have been happy to have offered civilities, but he did not give me the pleasure to see him.

[35] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[36] A letter from Madam Van Winter and her brother, dated Apr. 10, 1784, is in the *Washington Papers*.

At best I have only been an instrument in the hands of Providence, to effect, with the aid of France and many virtuous fellow Citizens of America, a revolution which is interesting to the general liberties of mankind, and to the emancipation of a country which may afford an Asylum, if we are wise enough to pursue the paths wch. lead to virtue and happiness, to the oppressed and needy of the Earth. Our region is extensive, our plains are productive, and if they are cultivated with liberallity and good sense, we may be happy ourselves, and diffuse happiness to all who wish to participate.

The Lady of whom you have made such honorable mention, is truly sensible of the obligation, and joins with me in wishing you every happiness which is to be found here, and met with hereafter. I have the honor, etc.[37]

*To BUSHROD WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1785.

Dear Bushrod: Your letter of the 20th. Ulto. did not come to my hands until the 31st. Whenever you have occasion to write to me from the line of the Post, always put your letter into the Mail. all other conveyances are uncertain; at best, irregular.

Not expecting you were going to Richmond, I did, previously to the receipt of your letter, write to the Attorney General (to whose care my letter to you had been addressed) requesting him to open it; and so far as it respected the promissory Note of Ryan, to comply with my desire on that head. Being on the spot, you can be informed of the state of this matter, and govern yourself accordingly.

By the last Post I inclosed an Advertisement to Mr. Hayes[38] (the Printer) requesting a meeting of the Proprietors of the

[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[38] James Hayes. He was publisher of *The Virginia Gazette, or American Advertiser*, Richmond, Va.

Great dismal Swamp. The Servant by whom I sent it to Alexandria got there after the Mail was dispatched; but meeting with the Stage, he says he put it into the hands of *some body* who promised to take care of it; as this may, or may not be the case, I beg you will make immediate enquiry, and in case of failure, desire him to insert the one herewith inclosed three weeks in his Gazette. And, as the notice will be short, to have it also published in some other Paper of general circulation. If nothing unforeseen should happed to prevent it, I expect to be in Richmond at the appointed time, and having no other business, should regret a disappointment.

The Holly berries, Geese and Swan, are here, but no mention made of the Cotten. All here join me in best wishes for you. I am etc.

P. S. Upon second thought I have sent the Advertisement to the Printer himself lest this letter should lye in the Post Office for want of your knowing it is there. The one inclosed for Doctr. Walker[39] endeavor to forward by some safe hand.[40]

To CHARLES THOMSON

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1785.

Dear Sir: In the latter part of last Spring, the Commissioners appointed to attend the embarkations at New York, previous to the evacuation of the city, made a report of their proceedings to me, accompanied by a voluminous list of the Slaves which had left that place. Soon after having the pleasure of Mr. Reeds[41] company here, he informed me in conversation, that the list[42] I had received was a duplicate of what had been

[39] Dr. John Walker.

[40] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

[41] Jacob(?) Read.

[42] Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

sent to Congress; upon which I filed it with my public papers. By the last Post he says he had been under a mistake, and wished me to forward the papers which are in my hands, to Congress. This I most assuredly would have done, but they are too bulky for the mail, and liable to much injury from the nature of such a carriage. However I will wait your direction, after acquainting you that two of the Commrs. Egbert Benson Esqr. and Lieut. Colo. Smith, with the Secretary Mr. Saml. Inches (and undoubtedly the papers from which the report, and proceedings were founded) are in N: York. If notwithstanding it is necessary to resort to me, the originals (for it is not in my power to make copies) shall be sent; altho it will make a chasm in my files, and disappoint many who apply to them for information respecting their negroes. I am, etc.[43]

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: A few days ago I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 5th. ulto; your other letter of the 26th. of Decr. came duly to hand, and should not have remained so long unacknowledged had I not been in daily expectation of accompanying my answer with a remittance: disappointment followed disappointment, but my expectation being kept alive, I delayed writing from one Post day to another until now, that I am assured by a Mercht. in Alexandria that I may depend upon a Bill, in a few days, upon a Mr. Sylvanus Dickinson of the City of Nw. York, for Two thousand five hundred Dollars. As it is probable I may receive it before the next weeks Post, I will on that occasion write you more fully: At present I will only add the sincere good wishes and best respects of Mrs.

[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Washington to yourself, Mrs. Clinton and family, to which with much truth, mine are united.

With great esteem, etc.

P. S. Since writing the above, I have recd. the enclos'd Bill, the second shall be sent by next Post, when I shall be more particular.[44]

*To CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND[45]

Mount Vernon, April 6, 1785.

Sir: By the last Post Majr. Jenifer transmitted me an Acct. of my Continental Certificates as they had been Audited in your Office; by which there is a difference of £64.14.7⅛ short of my estimation of their value.

This (for I did not go into the examination of figures) appears to have originated from the times of calculating the depreciation. I have always understood that depreciation was the same thro' the month, and if I did not misapprehend the Intendant, his ideas of it, accorded therewith.

However, I only ask for information, and because I had calculated myself in this manner, for I want no other measure than what is given to others. I am etc.

PS. How does yr. subscriptions to the Potomk. Navigation go on?[46]

*To JAMES DUANE

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: Enclosed you have my answer to the Acts of your Corporation, which I pray you to present. I thank you for the Arguments and judgment of the Mayor's Court of the City of

[44] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[45] Auditor, in the Intendant's office, of the State of Maryland.
[46] From a photograph of the original in the State House, Annapolis, Md.

New York in the Cause betwn. Elizabeth Rutgars and Joshua Waddington,[47] I have read them with all the attention I could give the subject, and though I pretend not to be a competent judge of the Law of Nations, or the principle and policy of the Statute upon which the Action was founded; yet, I must confess, that reason seems very much in favor of the opinion given by the Court, and my judgment yields a hearty assent to it.

It is painful, to hear that a State which used to be the foremost in Acts of liberality, and its exertion to establish our fœderal system upon a broad bottom and solid ground is contracting her ideas, and pointing them to local and independent measures; which, if persevered in, must Sap the Constitution of these States (already too weak), destroy our National character, and render us as contemptable in the eyes of Europe as we have it in our power to be respectable. It should seem as if the Impost of 5 pr Ct. would never take place; for no sooner does an obstinate State begin to relent, and adopt the recommendations of Congress, but some other runs restive; as if there was a combination among them, to defeat the measure.

From the latest European Accts. it is probable an accommodation will take place between the Emperor[48] and the Dutch, but to reverberate News to a man at the source of intelligence would be idle, therefore Mum.

The Dutch I conceive are too much attached to their possessions and their wealth, if they could yield to the pangs of parting with their Country, to adopt the plan you hinted to Mr. Van Berckel. The Nations of Europe are ripe for Slavery; a thirst after riches, promptitude to luxury, and a sinking into venality with their concomitants, untune them for manly exertions and virtuous Sacrifices.

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[47] A few papers concerning the case of Elizabeth Rutgers vs. Joshua Waddington are in the *Hamilton Papers* (Legal), 1784, in the Library of Congress.

[48] Emperor Joseph II, of Austria.

I do not know from whence the report of my coming to Trenton could have originated, unless from a probability of my accompanying the Marquis de la Fayette as far as New York should have caus'd it; he pressed me to the measure, but the season was too much opposed to it, to obtain my consent.

Mrs. Washington and myself, entertain a grateful sense of the kind recollection of us by you, Mrs. and Miss Duane, and the other branches of your family, and beg leave to present our Compliments to, and best wishes for, them all.

With very great esteem, &c.

P. S. If our Rocky-hill acquaintance, Mrs. Vanhorne, has removed (as she talked of doing) to the City of New York I pray you to recall me, in respectful terms, to her remembrance. [N.Y.H.S.]

*To JAMES DUANE

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: A few days since by Doctr. Lee,[49] I had the honor to receive your favors of the 16th. of December from Trenton, and 10th. of March from the City of New York. The former enclosing an Address of the City, and the freedom thereof in a very handsome golden Box.

For the flattering expression of the Address, and the honor which is confered on me by the freedom of the City, I entertain a grateful sense. I wish my powers were equal to my feelings, that I might express the latter in more lively terms than are contained in the enclosed answer.

Let me beseech you, Sir, at the moment you shall have laid it before your Worshipful Board, to add the strongest assurances of the respect and attachment with which I have the honor to be, their, and your, Most Obedt. etc. [N.Y.H.S.]

[49] Arthur Lee.

*To THE MAYOR, RECORDER, ALDERMEN, AND COMMONALTY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

[April 10, 1785]

Gentlemen: I receive your Address,[50] and the freedom of the City with which you have been pleased to present me in a golden Box,[51] with the sensibility and gratitude which such distinguished honors have a claim to. The flattering expression of both, stamps value on the acts; and call for stronger language than I am master of, to convey my sense of the obligation in adequate terms.

To have had the good fortune amidst the viscissitudes of a long and arduous contest "never to have known a moment when I did not possess the confidence and esteem of my Country." And that my conduct should have met the approbation, and obtained the affectionate regard of the State of New York (where difficulties were numerous and complicated) may be ascribed more to the effect of divine wisdom, which has disposed the minds of the people, harrassed on all sides, to make allowances for the embarrassments of my situation, whilst with fortitude and patience they sustained the loss of their Capitol, and a valuable part of their territory, and to the liberal sentiments, and great exertion of her virtuous Citizens, than to any merit of mine.

The reflection of these things now, after the many hours of anxious sollicitude which all of us have had, is as pleasing, as our embarrassments at the moments we encountered them, were distressing, and must console us for past sufferings and perplexities.

[50] In the *Washington Papers,* Dec. 2, 1784, as is also the parchment Freedom of the City of New York.

[51] The gold box was disposed of at the sales made to members of the Washington family at Mount Vernon in 1802, shortly after the death of Mrs. Washington. Its present whereabouts is unknown to the editor.

I pray that Heaven may bestow its choicest blessings on your City. That the devastations of War, in which you found it, may soon be without a trace. That a well regulated and benificial Commerce may enrichen your Citizens. And that, your State (at present the Seat of the Empire) may set such examples of wisdom and liberality, as shall have a tendency to strengthen and give permanency to the Union at home, and credit and respectability to it abroad. The accomplishment whereof is a remaining wish, and the primary object of all my desires.[52] [N. Y. H. S.]

* To DOCTOR JOHN WALKER

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: At the request of the Gentlemen who met in Richmond the day you parted with us, I have requested a meeting of the Proprietors of the Dismal Swamp in Richmond on Monday the 2d. day of May next, at which time and place I should be glad to see you as it is indispensably necessary to put the affairs of the Company under some better management. I hope every member will bring with him such papers as he is possessed of respecting this business.

I wrote you a line similar to this, to go from Richmond; but Mr. Carter informing me that he is about to send a Servant into your neighbourhood I embrace the oppertunity as more certain to give you this information. I am etc.[53]

[52] This letter came into the possession of one John Allen in the 1830's and was sold at auction in New York City in 1864. It was purchased by DeWitt C. Lent for $2,050. The mayor and aldermen sued for its recovery and secured possession. It passed into the custody of the New York Historical Society by gift from the city in 1873. The A. Df. S. is in the Library of Congress. The suit is reported in *51 N. Y. Supreme Court Reports,* January, 1868, p. 19.

[53] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Dr. William C. Rives, of Washington, D. C.

On April 10 Washington also forwarded a certificate of service to Frederick Weissenfels, with a brief note. Copies of both the note and certificate are in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

To THOMAS FREEMAN

Mount Vernon, April 11, 1785.

Sir: Not having heard a tittle from you since I left Mr. Simpsons in Septr. last; I wish for the detail of your proceedings in my business since that period, particularly with respect to applications, if any, for my Lands in your neighbourhood or elsewhere, and what has been done with the mill. I have obtained, some time since, a Patent for the round bottom above Captenon,[54] which may be rented upon the terms of my printed Advertisements.

Mr. Smith (especially as he lives at a distance, and is only in the county at the assizes) should have every assistance in hunting up the evidence necessary for the prosecution of my ejectments in the Court of Washington,[55] particularly as they respect the improvements in my behalf, intecedent to the possession of the Land by the present occupants; and the notice given them of its being mine, at, or immediately after the Settlements made by them. Colo. John Stephenson, Mr. Marcs. Stephenson and Mr. Danl. Morgan are, I shou'd suppose, most likely to be acquainted with Colo. Crawfords proceedings in this business. It is of consequence to ascertain all the improvements which were made for my use and benefit previous to the settlements of the present possessions. Colo. Crawford in a letter to me says, he built four houses on different parts of the Land; or made four improvements of some kind: if this can be proved it would defeat my opponents upon their own ground.

I should be glad to hear frequently from you. Letters lodged in the post office at Baltimore or Alexa., will not fail of getting safe to my hands. I am, etc.[56]

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[54] Captening Creek.
[55] Washington County, Pa.
[56] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

Gentn: I have received two letters from you, one of the 8th. of March, the other of the 5th. inst: and thank you for both.

I acquiesce readily to the conditional terms you have made on my behalf with Joseph Davenport: his wages are as high as the best Mills in this Country afford, and the priviledges for which he stipulates shall be granted him; with this addition, that his fire wood shall be carted to his door at my expence, and he may raise poultry for his own eating at my cost; but under no pretence *whatever* to sell any.

I wish the charge of removing him might be stipulated and made as reasonable as possible; otherwise the addition of it to wages and priviledges for a year only, will make him come high to me: for this reason if you entirely approve of him as a miller and man of character, I had rather the agreement should be for two years than one, if he is disposed to engage for that term. At present my Mill has the reputation of turning out superfine flour of the first quality: it commands a higher price in this country and the West Indies, than any other, and I should be unwilling it should lose this character from ignorance or bad conduct.

Roberts (my present Miller) for skill in grinding, and keeping a Mill in order, is inferior to *no* man: owing to this, to the times, and to the aversion I have to frequent changing of people, I have submitted for more than seven years to his impositions: he is also a good Cooper and millwright, he has lived with me near fifteen years, during which period I have not paid a shilling for repairs. He came to me with a full grown apprentice; for both I only paid £80 Pensa. Cury. per Ann: but during my absence he has been encreasing his wages and

priviledges in proportion as he faltered in his services; so that I had determined (now that I could look a little into my own business, even if there had been an entire reformation in his conduct) to have reduced his wages and priviledges, or parted with him, to the very standard of your letter; which I believe is as high as the best, and most extensive manufacturing Mills in this State, afford. Mine is but a poor stream, wanting water near half the year: for this reason if Davenport (being a cooper) is to work at this business (there being a very good shop within fifty yards of the dwelling house and Mill) when he is not engaged in grinding, packing &c., I wish it to be specified. In short, whatever is expected of either, by the other party, I pray may be explicitly declared, to avoid all desputes, misconceptions, after claims and uneasinesses. You know full well what ought to be expected from Davenport; and whatever you engage on my behalf, shall be religiously fulfilled.

As you must have incurred expence on my accot. in this business, I am ready and willing to discharge it, with many thanks for the trouble you have been at to serve me; and if it should ever be in my power to render you any return, I should be happy in doing it. I am, etc.[57]

To DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The post before last brought me your favor of the 31st. The next day I waited upon Colo. Hooe with your order, but he was confined to his bed and unable to do business. Two days after he sent me a bill on New York for 2,500 Dollars, payable at 15 days sight, and gave me assurances that he would pay the balance shortly. In consequence, you have my receipt

[57] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

for £1069.1.7 specie, at the foot of the enclosed list. I have passed my receipt for a specie payment because you desired it; in full confidence however, that if the Bill should not be duly honored, or that I should meet with delay or difficulty in receiving the money at Nw. York, or the balance; that it will be null, or have proper attention paid to the circumstances; for otherwise the interest of this money which was intended to pay a debt in Nw. York will cease, when a higher interest there will be accumulating that debt.

I had taken up an idea, that depreciation was the same thro' the month, and had calculated my demand accordingly: Mr. Richmond varies the depreciation every day, by which his acct. and mine differ £64–14–7–1/8. I suppose he is right, and that I must submit to the disappointment.

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your ready and pointed attention to this business. Mrs. Washington and Fanny Bassett present their compliments to you, and I pray you to be assured of the sincere esteem and regard with which I am, etc.[58]

*To CHARLES WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

Dear Brother: The enclosed is the last letter I have had from your Son George,[59] why it is so, I cannot readily Acct., except for the irregularity of the Post Office, which seems to be under very bad management. Another letter of his, of the [mutilated] to a young Lady of this family [mutilated] reason to look for him here the latter end of this, or beginning of next month.

I lend our Nephew Geo: Steptoe Washington a horse Saddle and Bridle to visit his Mother, of which he seems desirous,

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[59] George Augustine Washington.

it would be well for you to have attention to his return in time. Mr. Balch, Master of the Academy at which he is, speaks of him in favorable terms.

Immediately upon receipt of the money I informed Mr. Balch that I was ready to discharge any Expences which had been incurred on Acct. of the Boys; the enclosed letter from him is the only answer I have got to it. As they have been there near Eight Months the Sum you sent me will not, I expect, discharge what may be due for Schooling, Board and Clothing; I therefore wish to have more sent me as my own expenditures are too great to allow me to be in advance for them. I have desired Mr. Balch to receive the Boys into his own family again as soon as his house is in order for it. Mrs. Washington joins in love to my Sister and yr. family. And I am etc.

How does yr. Subscriptions to the Potomk. Navigation go on? [H.L.]

*To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1785.

My dear Marqs. Your letter of the 15th. of Septr. last year,[60] introductory of Mr. Duche, I had the honor to receive a few days since.

However great that Gentleman's merits are, and however much I might be inclined to serve him, candor required me to tell him, as I now do you, that there is no opening (within my view) by which he could enter, and succeed in the line of his profession, in this Country.

Besides being a stranger, and unacquainted with the language of these States, perfectly, many of them, to prevent an

[60] Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

inundation of British Attorneys of which they were apprehensive, and of whose political principles they entertained not the most favorable sentiments; have passed qualifying Acts, by which *residence* and *study* in *them* for a specific time, is made essential to entitle a Lawyer to become a practitioner in our Courts of justice.

Therefore, should Mr. Duche incline, notwithstanding, to settle, altogether, or spend any considerable portion of his time in this Country, his friends cannot serve him better than by obtaining for him some appointment in the Consular departments; for the discharge of which, I presume he must be well qualified.

With great attachment and the most affectionate regard I am etc.[61]

To GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1785.

Dear Sir: I promised you a letter by the last Post, but it was not in my power to fulfill it; business not my own, and with which I really ought not to be troubled, engrosses so large a portion of my time (having no assistance) that which is essential to me, is entirely neglected.

I now send you Hooe and Harrisons second Bill upon Mr. Sylvanus Dickenson; altho' I hope, and expect the first will have been paid before it reaches. I also send you a statement of the payments,[62] as they *ought* to have been made to you, and should be obliged to you for comparing them with your own receipts, and for informing me of their correspondence. The money now remitted I wish to have placed to the credit

[61] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by the Hon. Sol Bloom, of New York City.

[62] A photostat of this statement is in the *Washington Papers*. The original is in the Huntington Library.

of my Bond, and the balance, if any, carried to that of the accot. sent me in December last. I should be glad also to have as early and long notice of the call for this last sum, as can knowingly and conveniently be given; for I find it (under my present circumstances) very difficult to raise money equal to the pressure of my wants; those who owed me before the commencement of hostilities, having taken advantage of my absence and the tender laws, to discharge their debts with a shilling or six pence in the pound: and those to whom I owed money, I have now to pay in specie at the real value.

I have to thank you my dear Sir, for the duplicate Deed, and plan of our purchase in the Ochriskeney Patent; and pray you to take the trouble of doing with my moiety the same as you would do with your own at all times and in all respects.

The lime trees which you were so obliging as to send me last November were unfortunate; they lay at Norfolk until the frosts were entirely over, and only came to my hands the 18th. of Feby. I immediately planted, and have since been nursing them; they have yet the appearance of *feeble* life, but I have no expectation of their living. My thanks nevertheless are equally due for these, for the nutts, the corn and the pease; the last of which I sowed yesterday: if I am too late in doing it, the Spring (which has been the most unfavourable I ever knew), and not me, is to blame; if too early, it is from ignorance and my neglect in not making the necessary enquiry for the proper season. The corn I shall begin to plant in a few days and will renew the seeds occasionally.

I will rely upon your Excely. for the seeds of the Balm tree, White and Spruce Pine. I believe it is the most certain way of raising them: most of the trees evergreen, not sowed where they are to stand, or not raised in Nurseries and early transplanted, are unsuccessful; and tho' our impatience will not

suffer us to adopt the practice, it is the opinion of Miller (in his Gardeners Dy.) who seems to understand the culture of Trees equal to any other writer I have met with, that it is the most expeditious method of rearing them. As a quantity of these seeds would be bulky in the Cones, they would be equally good taken out and packed in dry sand; and is the method I would beg leave to recommend. To them I should be glad to have added some of the Hemlock, and indeed any other seeds of trees which are not common in this climate. I shall make no apology for the trouble I know this request must give you, because I persuade myself you will have pleasure in contributing to an innocent amusement. I have planted within these few days many of the hickory nuts which you sent me, not doubting their successful growth here. Mrs. Washington desires me to present her compliments and thanks to you, for your care of the case of Grotto work, it came very safe. She also joins me very sincerely in congratulating Mrs. Clinton and yourself on her restoration to health, and in wishing it may be of long continuance.

I am sorry for the loss of my Vines, they were of the first quality in France; and sent to me by one of the first characters in it, for abilities, respectability and his curious attention to these things. I was in hopes there had been an abundance, and that you would have participated in the fruit of them.

As you are at the source of intelligence, it would be idle in me to reverberate what is brought by the packets, and we have little of a domestic nature worthy of attention. There are plans in agitation for improving and extending the inland navigation of this country; and opening roads of communication between the heads of the rivers Potomac and James, and the western waters. They have received public countenance and support, but I cannot at this moment speak decisively to

the issue, we flatter ourselves it will be favourable, but may be mistaken. Mrs. Washington joins me in very best wishes for you and all your family. With regard and attachment, I am, etc.[63]

*To MATHEW CAREY

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1785.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 30th. Ulto. If it should ever be in my power to render you any Service, I should be ready, and happy to do it. With the Gentlemen of my acquaintance in Philadelphia, I persuade myself you stand as well, as my introduction could place you. If there are any here, to whom the mention of your case would be of any avail, I should have pleasure in doing it. I thank you for your kind offer of forwarding, with safety, the Gazettes of Philadelphia; but believe there will be no occasion for giving you the trouble at present. I am etc.[64]

To WILLIAM GRAYSON[65]

Mount Vernon, April 25, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I will not let your favor of the fifteenth, for which I thank you, go unacknowledged, tho' it is not in my power to give it the consideration I wish, to comply with the request you have made, being upon the eve of a journey to Richmond to a meeting of the Dismal Swamp company, which by my own appointment is to take place on Monday next; and into that part of the country I am hurried by an express which is

[63] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[64] From a facsimile of the original in the possession of Edward Carey Gardiner, published in "One Hundred and Fifty Years of Publishing, 1785–1935," kindly furnished by Lea & Febiger, of Philadelphia.

[65] Delegate to the Continental Congress from Virginia.

just arrived with the accot. of the deaths of the mother and Brother of Mrs. Washington, in the last of whose hands (Mr. B. Dandridge) the embarrassed affairs of Mr. Custis had been placed, and call for immediate attention.

To be candid, I have had scarce time to give the report of the Committee,[66] which you did me the honor to send me, a reading, much less to consider the force and tendency of it. If experience has proven that the most advantageous way of disposing of Land, is by whole Townships, there is no arguing against facts; therefore, if I *had* had time I shou'd have said nothing on that head: but from the cursory reading I have given it, it strikes me that by suffering each State to dispose of a proportionate part of the whole in the State, that there may be State jobbing: in other words that the Citizens of each State may be favored at the expence of the Union; whilst a reference of these matters to them has, in my opinion, a tendency to set up seperate interests; and to promote the independence of individual States upon the downfall of the federal government, which in my opinion is already too feeble, much too humiliated and tottering to be supported without props.

It is scarcely to be imagined that any man, or society of men, who may incline to possess a township, would make the purchase without viewing the Land in person or by an Agent. Wherein then lies the great advantage of having the sale in each State, and by State officers? for from the same parity of reasoning, there should be different places in each State for the accommodation of its Citizens. Would not all the ostensible purposes be fully answered by sufficient promulgation in each State, of the time and place of Sale to be holden at the nearest convenient place to the Land, or at the seat of Congress. Is it not highly probable that those who may incline to emigrate,

[66] Of Congress.

or their Agents would attend at such time and place? And (there being no fixed prices to the Land) would not be the high or low sale of it depend upon the number of purchasers and the competition occasioned thereby; and are not these more likely to be greater at one time and place than at thirteen? One place might draw the world to it, if proper notice be given: but foreigners would scarcely know what to do with thirteen, to which, or when to go to them. These are first thoughts, perhaps incongruous ones, and such as I myself might reprobate upon more mature consideration: at present however, I am impressed with them, and (under the rose) a penetrating eye, and close observation, will discover thro' various disguises a disinclination to add new States to the confederation, westward of us; which must be the inevitable consequence of emigration to, and the population of that territory: and as to restraining the citizens of the Atlantic States from transplanting themselves to that soil, when prompted thereto by interest or inclination, you might as well attempt (while our Governmts. are free) to prevent the reflux of the tide, when you had got it into your rivers.

As the report of the Committee goes into the minutia, it is not minute enough, if I read it a right; it provides for the irregular lines, and parts of townships, occasioned by the interference with the Indian boundaries, but not for its interference with Lake Erie, the western boundary of Pennsylvania (if it is governed by the meanders of the Delaware) or the Ohio river which separates the ceded Lands from Virginia, all of which involve the same consequences.

I thank you for the sentiments and information, given me in your letter of the 10th. of March, respecting the Potomac navigation. My present determination is, to hold the shares which this State has been pleased to present me, in trust for the use

and benefit of it: this will subserve the plan, encrease the public revenue, and not interfere with the line of conduct I had prescribed myself. I am, etc.[67]

To CHEVALIER DE LA SERRE[68]

Mount Vernon, May 12, 1785.

Sir: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me the 20th. of last month, I found at this place when I returned from Richmond a few days ago; but it had been previously lost in the high way, and came to me open, and without a cover: by what means it met with this accident, I am unable to learn, a neighbour of mine picked it up in the condition I have mentioned, and sent it to me.

I pray you to be assured Sir, that I should have great pleasure in presenting you with a letter to the Count de Vergennes if I cou'd suppose that my recommendation would have any weight at the Court of Versailles, and if I had ever opened a correspondence with the Minister thereof on a subject of this nature: but not having the vanity to suppose the first, and never having attempted the latter; I persuade myself I shall meet a ready excuse for not complying with your request in this instance.

Not being under such delicate circumstances with my intimate acquaintance and friend the Marqs. de la Fayette, I have communicated your wishes to him; and as no language can do it more emphatically than your own, I have taken the liberty of enclosing your letter to me, to him. I have the honor, etc.[67]

[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On April 29 Washington left Mount Vernon for Richmond, Va., which he reached on the evening of May 1. He left Richmond May 4, and arrived at Mount Vernon, May 6.

[68] Or Terre.

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, May 12, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs. The enclosed letter from the Chevr. de la Serre conveys a strong expression of his wishes; and as you are well acquainted with his merits, his connexions, and his intention of remaining in America, I persuade myself it is unnecessary for me to add more to recommend him to your favourable notice in the line he wishes, and which he finds most convenient for himself to walk in, if the present Consul of France, at Baltimore can be better provided for. I therefore submit his case and pretensions to that spirit which I know is ever ready to promote the happiness of others. It is unnecessary to repeat the assurances of my affection and regard for you. You know they cannot be encreased, and will never diminish. Adieu Yrs. &ca.[69]

*To FRANCIS HOPKINSON

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Dear Sir: In for a penny, in for a pound is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the Painters pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like patience on a Monument whilst they are delineating the lines of my face.

It is a proof among many others of what habit and custom can effect. At first I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a Colt is of the Saddle. The next time, I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray moves more readily to the Thill, than I do to the Painters Chair. It may easily be conceived therefore that

[69] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I yielded a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine.

Letters from England,[70] recommendatory of this Gentleman, came to my hands previous to his arrival in America; not only as an Artist of acknowledged eminance, but as one who had discovered a friendly disposition towards this Country, for which, it seems, he had been marked.

It gave me pleasure to hear from you. I shall always feel an interest in your happiness, and with Mrs. Washingtons compliments, and best wishes joined to my own, for Mrs. Hopkinson and yourself, I am etc.[71]

To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for your several favors of the 7th. of March and 12th. and 19th. of April.

Believe me, the first was not productive of more surprize than real concern: the account of your failure was as much regretted, as it was unexpected by me, and I feel for the causes of it, and for your present situation. You are sensible that my commissions have been more troublesome, than profitable to you, and as they are growing less, to continue them might add to your embarrassments, otherwise I do assure you I would continue them with pleasure.

For the many friendly offices you have rendered me, I pray you to accept my thanks. The grass seeds are all at hand, tho'

[70] Washington's "Diary" states that these letters were from George William Fairfax, Gouverneur Morris, John Dickinson, Francis Hopkinson, and others. The last two, however, were not in England. Washington wrote brief acknowledgments to John Dickinson (May 16) and, presumably, to the others. A photostat of the letter to Dickinson is in the *Washington Papers*.

[71] The original, from a photostat of which this letter is taken, is stated to be in the New York Historical Society. A similar claim is made by the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society of Wilkes-Barre, Pa. This letter has been facsimiled many times and the different facsimiles are fairly numerous.

late coming. Mr. Lewis has engaged me a Miller: the method you have taken to get the accot. concerning the Indian meal and flour adjusted, is perfectly agreeable to me; and I approve of what you have done respecting my letter to Mr. Lamont, the author of the Poems which were proposed to be dedicated to me. I have never received a paper from Messrs. Claypoole and Dunlap since your mention of their intention to forward them regularly, and think myself so ungenteelly treated in this business, by them, that I never mean to take another of their Gazettes. If they had really sent them, I can conceive no reason why they should not have got to hand as well as those from Carey's, and others from Boston.

The balance of your accot. Currt. £2.3.0½, I have given to Genl. Moylan, who will pay it to you, or your assignees. I have done the same with respect to Claypooles rect. for £3.15.0, cost of printing my advertisement. If you have not already paid his accot. for the Gazettes, do me the favor and justice to let him know (when it is done) that I am paying for what I have not had, and that it is my request the accot. may be closed between us; as I do not mean, unless I can be better satisfied than I am at present, to stand longer upon his books.

Mrs. Washington joins me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Biddle and family, and we both hope that fortune may be more propitious to you in future. If it should ever be in my way to render you any services, I shou'd have pleasure in doing it. I am, etc.[72]

*To THOMAS McKEAN

Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785.

Sir: I had the honor to receive your letter of the 23d. Ulto. by Mr. Pine,[73] whose character as a historical and Portrait

[72] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[73] Robert Edge Pine.

Painter, and as a friend to the rights of America, has been very favorably represented to me from England before he made his appearance in this Country. His present design,[74] if well executed, will do equal credit to his imagination and Pencil; and be interesting to America. I have the honor etc. [H.S.P.]

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM PACA

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1785.

Sir: Mr. Pine who will deliver this letter to your Excellency, is an artist of acknowledged eminence, and one who has given the world many pleasing and forcible specimens of genius: he is engaged in painting some of the interesting events of the late war; in the prosecution of which he finds it necessary to call at Annapolis. I take the liberty therefore of introducing him to your civilities, and of assuring you of the esteem and respect with which I am, etc.[75]

To CHRISTOPHER RICHMOND

Mount Vernon, May 19, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 10th. not getting to my hands 'till the 15th., I had no opportunity of writing to you before the meeting of the subscribers on the 17th., at which I exhibited the list you sent me, which was received and acted upon.

Agreeably to the Laws of the two States, the subscription books ought to have been at that meeting; after which all subscriptions are to be made with the President and Directors.[76] If it should have happened therefore, that any names have

[74] Pine's project was to paint portraits of the men who took a prominent part in the Revolution and to paint the principal of their movements.

[75] On May 18 practically the same letter was sent to Edward Lloyd, of Maryland.

[76] Of the Potomac Company.

been entered on your Books subsequent, and in addition to the list you sent me; it would be proper for such subscribers to enter their names as the Law directs in the Book to be opened by the Directors, in order to give validity to their subscriptions and to prevent disputes; this, I presume, may be done by letter. I am, etc.[77]

To NATHANAEL GREENE

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1785.

My dr. Sir: After a long and boisterous passage, my Nephew G. A. Washington returned to this place a few days since and delivered me your letter of the 25th. of April.

Under the state of the case between you and Capt: Gunn,[78] I give it as my decided opinion that your honor and reputation will not only stand perfectly acquitted for the non-acceptance of his challenge, but that your prudence and judgment would have been condemnable for accepting of it, in the eyes of the world: because if a commanding officer is amenable to private calls for the discharge of public duty, he has a dagger always at his breast, and can turn neither to the right nor to the left without meeting its point; in a word, he is no longer a free agent in office, as there are few military decisions which are not offensive to one party or the other.

However just Capt: Gunns claim upon the public might have been, the mode adopted by him (according to your accot.) to obtain it, was to the last degree dangerous. A precedent of the sort once established in the army, would no doubt have been followed; and in that case would unquestionably have produced a revolution; but of a very different kind from that which, happily for America, has prevailed.

[77] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[78] Capt. James Gunn, of the First Continental Dragoons.

It gives me real concern to find by your letter, that you are still embarrassed with the affairs of Banks: I should be glad to hear, that the evil is likely to be temporary only; ultimately, that you will not suffer. From my Nephews account, this man has participated of [*sic*] the qualities of Pandora's box, and has spread as many mischiefs. How came so many to be taken in by him? If I recollect right, when I had the pleasure to see you last, you said an offer had been made you of back lands, as security or payment in part for your demand. I then advised you to accept it. I now repeat it, you cannot suffer by doing this, altho' the lands may be high rated. If they are good I would almost pledge myself that you will gain more in ten years by the rise in the price, than you could by accumulation of interest.

The Marqs. de la Fayette is safe arrived in France, and found his Lady and family well. From his letters, those of the Chevr. de la Luzerne, Count de Rochambeau and others to me, dated between the middle and last of Feby., I think there will be no war in Europe this year, but some of the most intelligent of these writers are of opinion that the Emperial Court of Russia, will not suffer matters to remain tranquil much longer. The desire of the first to annex the Dutchy of Bavaria to its dominions in exchange for the Austrian possessions in the Netherlands, is very displeasing, it seems, to the military powers, which added to other matters may kindle the flames of a general war.

Few matters of domestic nature are worth the relation; otherwise I might inform you, that the plan for improving and extending the navigation of this river has met a favourable beginning. Tuesday last was the day appointed by Law for the subscribers to meet; 250 shares were required by law to constitute and incorporate the company: but, upon comparing

the Books, it was found that between four and five hundred shares were subscribed.

What has been done respecting the navigation of James river I know not; I fear little.

This State did a handsome thing, and in a handsome manner for me; in each of these navigations they gave me, and my heirs forever, fifty shares: but as it is incompatible with my principles, and contrary to my declarations, I do not mean to accept of them. But how to refuse them, without incurring the charge of disrespect to the Country on the one hand, and an ostentatious display of disinterestedness on my part on the other, I am a little at a loss: time and the good advice of my friends must aid me, as the Assembly will not meet 'till Octor., and made this gratuitous offer among, if not the last act of the last Session, as if they were determined I should not resolve what to do from the *first* impulse. Mrs. Washington joins me in every good wish for you, and with sentiments of attachment and regard, I am, &c.[79]

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH[80]

Mount Vernon, May 21, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Boulton[81] delivered me your letter of the 13th., last evening: I thank you for sending him to me. I have agreed with him to finish my large room, and to do some other work,[82]

[79] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[80] Of Maryland.

[81] Richard Boulton, of St. Mary's County, Md.

[82] Boulton was to begin work in about 3 weeks. In the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress is a copy of the agreement between Boulton and Washington, dated May 21, 1785, by the terms of which Boulton was to finish "the large room at the North end of the said Washingtons dwelling House (Mount Vernon) in a plain and elegant manner; either of Stucco, Wainscot, or partly of both as the said George Washington shall direct . . . that he will give a Cieling to the Piazza of plain Wainscot . . . and shall moreover Carve, Turn, Glaze, or Paint (inside work) if . . . required."

and have no doubt from the character given of him by you, that he will answer my purposes, as he has no one now to lead him into temptation, and will be far removed from improper associates unless he is at much pains to hunt them: it may therefore be expected that he will avoid the rock he has split upon lately.

I thank you sincerely my good Sir, for the offer of such of your imported articles as you have not an immediate call for; and will take any proportion which will be most convenient for you to share, of the Spirit of Turpentine, oil and paints of all sorts, Lead, Sash, and pullies, of the different sorts and sizes of nails, as also the two plate brass Locks, if Mr. Boulton upon examination, shall think they will answer my room, and of the glass 8 by 10. The large kind of glass does not suit my sashes (which are all made), and a marble slab (indeed two) I am already provided with.

I have promised to send my waggon a cover'd one with lock and key) to Colo. Platers,[83] on some landing above, for Mr. Boulton's tools: all, or such part of the articles as I have enumerated and you can spare, and the waggon can bring in addition to the Tools, may accompany them; and the cost and charges of them shall be paid to your order.

Mrs. Washington and the family join me in offering respectful compliments to, and best wishes for you and your Lady, and with very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.

P. S. 'Ere this, I was in hopes of having had it in my power to have offered the service of a Jack, or two, of the first race in Spain, to some of your Mares, if you shou'd be inclined to breed Mules, but they are not yet arrived, another year, I shall be happy to do this.[84]

[83] Col. George Plater, of St. Mary's County, Md.
[84] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JACQUELIN AMBLER[85]

Mount Vernon, May 22, 1785.

Sir: I had the honor to receive your favor of the 12th. in time for the Meeting; and in consequence of the power given me by you, represented the State on the 17th. inst:

I have the pleasure to inform you that the subscriptions (including those in behalf of the two States) amounted to upwards of four hundred shares; consequently the company became legally constituted and incorporated, a president and Directors were chosen, and the business, we persuade ourselves, will be advanced as fast as the nature of it will admit. I have the honor, etc.[86]

*To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Dear Sir: The last Post brought me your letter of the 14th., inclosing one of the 30th. of April from Mr. Hollyday. As soon as it is in my power to refresh my memory by having recurrence to my Papers, I will write you, or Mr. Hollyday, more fully on the subject of the legacy in Colo. Colvils Will to Miss Anderson;[87] or person under whom she claims; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I have not been able since my retirement, to arrange my Papers, or to attend, in the smallest degree, to my private concerns. The former, from the hurry with which they have been removed from Book cases into Trunks, and sent off to escape the ravages of the enemy, when their Vessels have appeared, are in great disorder.

[85] Treasurer of the State of Virginia.
[86] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[87] Miss Harriet Rebecca Anderson, of London.

I allotted the last Winter for the adjustment of all these matters; but never could command as much time as even to *enter* upon the business; and every matter and thing which respects the latter, are in the Situation I left them ten years ago. The numberless applications from officers of the several lines of the Army for Certificates of Service, recommendations, Copies of Orders, referrences of old matters, with which I ought not to be troubled, in addition to other corrispondencies in which my situation has involved me, confines me more to my writing Desk than I ever was at any period of my life; and deprives me of necessary exercise. These, with other causes, have produced the effect I have mentioned; which I feel more sensibly, as the business of others, with which I have been concerned, is involved; and is now, undergoing the same Suspension, as my own. For sometime past I have been (unsuccessfully) endeavouring to get a single man of good character, and decent appearance (for he will be at my Table and with my Company) to ease me of this burthen; and if you could recommend one of this description, who would not expect high wages (for these I cannot afford) I should be obliged to you for so doing. To suit me, he must be a person of liberal education. a master of composition. and have a competent knowledge of Accts.; for I have those of ten years standing, and the intermediate transactions, to overhaul and adjust.

Will you ever come to see me? You may be assured that there are few persons in the World, whose visits would give more sincere pleasure at Mount Vernon than yours. Nothing could encrease the satisfaction of it more, than bringing Mrs. Tilghman with you; to whom, and to yourself, Mrs. Washington joins in every good wish with Dr. Sir, etc.

PS. Upon Second thoughts, it occurs, that the Revd. Mr. West of Baltimore, can do all that is necessary for Miss Anderson,

without any agency of mine; at least may determine with precision what ought to be done. He is the Executor of his Brother, Mr. John West, who was the *principal* acting Executor of Colo. Thos. Colvil. and has been, I am informed, assiduously employed lately, in adjusting the concerns of that Estate.

As I shall not write to Mr. Hollyday until I can do it more to the purpose than at present, I will rely upon your communicating what is here mentioned, to him.

I am in want of two inch pine Plank. The man who is engaged to work for me, and who came lately from Baltimore, says he saw a good deal at that place, of the Eastern white Pine, which appeared to him to be seasoned and fit for my uses. If any Vessel should be coming round to Alexandria, and you could send me from two to 500 feet of it, you would oblige me.[88] Yrs.[89] [H. S. P.]

To JOHN SWAN

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Sir: The *little* share I had in the administration of Colo. Colville's Estate, and the time which have elapsed since I had *any* concern at all with the Affairs of it, render me very incompetent to give the information you require.

Mr. John West deceased was the principal acting Executor of the Will of Colo. Colvill, and the Revd. Mr. West of Baltimore is the executor of John, and has I am told taken much pains to adjust the papers of his brother and the business of that Estate: from him therefore you may probably obtain more precise information of the assets, and of the claimants

[88] On July 6 Washington wrote briefly to Tilghman, acknowledging receipt of the lumber.

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

therefor under the wild devises of the Will, than is in my power at this time to give you.

All I recollect of the matter is, that the devises to certain persons in England; relations of the Testator, were so indefinite, and stirred up such a multitude of claims, that it was adjudged necessary for the safety of the Executor when the surplus Estate (if any) should be ascertained, to deposit the same in the hands of the Chancellor to be disposed of to the rightful owner, upon due proof of their identity before him. What may have been the surplus, if the accots. have been finally settled; what has been done with it, or under what predicament it may have been placed by the Laws of this Government, I have it not in my power, without a good deal of research, to inform you; not having been able to look into this business any more than into that which more immediately concerns my own, since my return to private life. for eight years previous to it, it is well known I could not. I am, etc.[90]

To BURWELL BASSETT

Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785.

Dear Sir: It would have given me much pleasure to have seen you at Richmond; and it was part of my original plan to have spent a few days with you at Eltham, whilst I was in the lower parts of the country; but an intervention of circumstances not only put it out of my power to do the latter, but would have stopped my journey to Richmond altogether, had not the meeting (the time and the place) been of my own appointing. I left company at home when I went away, who proposed to wait my return, among whom a Mr. Pine, an artist of eminence, came all the way from Philadelphia for some materials for an historical painting which he is about,

[90] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

and for which he was obliged to stay 'till I got back, which I did after an absence of eight days only.

My Nephew G. Aug: Washington is just returned from his peregrination; apparently much amended in his health, but not *quite* free from the disorder in his breast. I have understood that his addresses to your Daughter were made with your consent; and I now learn that he is desirous, and she is willing to fulfill the engagement they have entered into; and that they are applying to you for permission therefor.

It has ever been a maxim with me thro' life, neither to promote, nor to prevent a matrimonial connection, unless there should be something indispensably requiring interference in the latter: I have always considered marriage as the most interesting event of one's life, the foundation of happiness or misery; to be instrumental therefore in bringing two people together who are indifferent to each other, and may soon become objects of hatred; or to prevent a union which is prompted by mutual esteem and affection, is what I never could reconcile to my feelings; and therefore, neither directly nor indirectly have I ever said a syllable to Fanny or George upon the subject of their intended connexion; but as their attachment to each other seems to have been early formed, warm and lasting, it bids fair to be happy: if therefore you have no objection, I think the sooner it is consummated the better.

I have just now informed them (the former thro' Mrs. Washington) that it is my wish they should live here.

It is unnecessary I hope to say how happy we should be to see you, her brothers, and any of her friends here upon this occasion (who can make it convenient and are disposed to come); all here join in best wishes for you, and with very sincere esteem etc.[91]

[91] Ford's text varies in numerous points from this "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. He does not state his source.

To GOVERNOR DAVID PARRY[92]

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor, lately, to receive your favor of the 18th. of July last year. For the politeness with which your Excellency was pleased to receive my nephew G: A. Washington, and for the distinguished marks of attention which you shewed him whilst he was in the Island of Barbadoes (for which he retains a grateful sense) I feel myself exceedingly obliged, and should be happy in opportunities to convince vour Excelly. of the impression they had made on me.

My nephew, after a peregrination thro' many of the W. India Islands, spending some time in Bermuda, and the winter in Charleston (So. Carolina) returned home a few days ago, a good deal *amended* in his health, but not perfectly restored to it. I have the honor, etc.[93]

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1785.

Gentn: In consequence of your letter of the 5th. of last month, I discharged Wm. Roberts from my Mill. It now is, and has been for some time past without a Miller; and as Mr. Davenport from your Accot. would be ready to take charge of it in about three weeks (now seven), and not yet come, nor any reason given why he has not; I am apprehensive of some disappointment.

If this is the case I should be glad to know it as soon as possible. One Baker, who referred to you for a character, and was employ'd by Colo. Biddle at his Mill at Georgetown, has

[92] Of Barbados, West Indies.
[93] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

applied to me; but considering myself under engagement, I gave him no encouragement. A person who writes the enclosed letter has also offered, but I have given him no answer. Some others have likewise made application, but as I depended upon Davenport I asked for no character nor enquired into their qualifications. If Davenport should have disappointed me, would Baker answer my purpose? Would Reynolds do better? Or have you any other in view which you think preferable to both? I am sorry to give you so much trouble with my affairs but hope you will excuse it. I am Gentn, etc.[94]

To WILLIAM MINOR

Mount Vernon, May 27, 1785.

Sir: My objection to paying your account when here, was, now is, and, whether it is done or not, will be: that it comes neither under the letter nor spirit of my letter to Mr. Baker. My object was to give Lawce. Posey[95] a years schooling, to fit him for some of the better occupations of life: to do this, I agreed to pay his board also, both of which together, I was inform'd would amount at the free school, to £17, Md. Curry. What followed? Why he neither went to the School, nor boarded with the person under whose care he was intended to be put, *this by your own confession.* Is it just, is it reasonable then that I should look *back* to expences which had been incurred previous to the date of my letter; nor even *forward* to what might be incurred, if the end which I had in view was not to be answered by it? If the child did not go to the school nor derive the benefits which were intended him from it, could it be supposed I meant to pay for his board without;

[94] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[95] A son of John Posey.

when his fathers House and eye were more proper than any other? Might he not as well have been at home with his father, as at any other place idle? Upon these grounds it was and under this state I repeat it, that if there is a disinterested man upon Earth, who will say I ought to comply with your request, I will do it: and you may have the chusing of him or them; for it does not suit me to go from home on this business. I am, &c.[96]

To JOHN HARVIE

Mount Vernon, May 31, 1785.

Sir: I am informed that a patent (in consequence of a Certificate from Commrs. appointed to enquire into, and decide upon claims for settlement of the Western Lands) is about to issue to the heirs of Michl. Cresap, from the Land Office of this Commonwealth, for a tract of land on the river Ohio formerly in Augusta County, now commonly called and distinguished by the [name of] Round bottom: against granting which to the heirs of the said Cresap, I enter a Caveat for the following reasons; First, because this Land was discovered by me in the month of Octor. 1770, and then marked; which was before, as I have great reason to believe, the said Cresap, or any person in his behalf had ever seen, or had the least knowledge of the tract. Secondly, because I did at that time, whilst I was on the Land, direct Captn. (afterwds. Colo.) Willm. Crawford to survey the same for my use, as a halfway place or stage between Fort Pitt and the 200,000 acres of land which he was ordered to survey for the first Virginia regiment agreeably to Govr. Dinwiddie's Proclamation of 1754. Thirdly, because consequent of this order he made the survey

[96] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

(this survey is either in the hands of the county Surveyor of Augusta, or with my agent in the Westn. Country: it is not to be found among my papers; tho' I am sure of the fact, and will procure it if necessary) in the month of the year following for 587 acres, and returned it to me accordingly: and equally certain I am that it was made before Mr. Cresap or any person in his behalf had ever stretch'd a chain thereon, knew of, or, as I have already observed, had taken a single step to obtain the land. Fourthly, because subsequent of this survey; but previous to any claim of Cresaps, a certain Dr. Brisco possessed himself of the Land, and relinquished it, after I had written him a letter in the words contained in the inclosure No. 1.[97] Fifthly, because upon the first information I received of Cresaps pretentions, I wrote him a letter, of which No. 2 is a copy.[98] Sixthly, because it was the practice of Cresap, according to the information given me, to notch a few trees, and sell as many bottoms on the river above the Little Kanhawa as he could obtain purchasers, to the disquiet and injury of numbers. Seventhly, Because the Commrs. who gave the Certificate under which his heirs now claim, could have had no knowledge of my title thereto, being no person in that District properly authorised; during my absence, to support my claim. Eighthly, Because the survey, which was made by Colo. Crawford, who was legally appointed by the Masters of Wm. and Mary College for the purpose of surveying the aforesaid 200,000 acres, is expressly recognized and deemed valid by the first section of the Act, entitled an Act, *see the Act;* as the same was afterwards returned by the surveyor of the county in which the Land lay. Ninthly and lastly, Because I have a Patent for the said Land, under the

[97] See Washington's letter to Dr. John Brisco, Dec. 3, 1772, *ante.*
[98] See Washington's letter to Michael Cresap, Sept. 26, 1773, *ante.*

seal of the said Commonwealth signed by the Governr. in due form on the 30th. day of Octor. 1784; consequent of a legal Survey made the 14th. of July 1773 as just mentioned, and now of record in the Land Office.

For these reasons I protest against a Patent's issuing for the Land for which the Commissioners have given a Certificate to the Heirs of Mr. Cresap so far as the same shall interfere with mine: the legal and equitable right thereto being in me.

If I am defective in form in entering this Caveat, I hope to be excused, and to have my mistakes rectified, I am unaccustomed to litigations; and never disputed with any man until the ungenerous advantages which have been taken of the peculiarity of my situation, and an absence of eight years from my country, has driven me into Courts of Law to obtain common justice. I have the honor, etc.[99]

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, June 2, 1785.

Dr. Sir: As your letter of the 30th. ulto. did not reach me until late this afternoon, and as the Post goes from Alexandria at four o'Clock in the morning, I have scarcely a moment (being also in company) to write you a reply. I was not sufficiently explicit in my last: the terms upon which Mr. Falconer came to this Country are too high for my finances and (to you, my dear Sir, I will add) numerous expences. I do not wish to reduce his, perhaps well founded, expectations; but it behooves me to consult my own means of complying with them.

I had been in hopes that a young man of no great expectations might have *begun* the world with me, for about fifty

[99] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

or sixty pounds pr. ann: Virga. curry: but for one qualified in all respects to answer my purposes, I would have gone as far as £75, more would rather distress me.

My purposes are these; to write letters agreeably to what shall be dictated; do all other writing which shall be entrusted to him; Keep accounts; examine, arrange and properly methodize my Papers which are in great disorder; ride, at my expence, to do such business as I may have in different parts of this or the other States, if I should find it more convenient to send, than attend myself, to the execution thereof: And, which was not hinted at in my last, to initiate two little children (a girl of 6 and a boy of 4 years of age, descendants of the decd. Mr. Custis who live with me and are very promising) in the first rudiments of education: this, to both parties, would be mere amusement, because it is not my desire that the Children should be confined closely. If Mr. Falconer should incline to accept the above stipend, in addition to his board, washing and mending; and *you* (for I wou'd rather have your *own opinion* of the gentleman, than the *report* of a thousand others in his favor) upon a close investigation of his character, temper and moderate political tenets (for supposing him an English man, he may come with the prejudices and doctrines of his Country) should find him competent to the duties above mentioned, the sooner he comes the better my purpose would be promoted.

If I had had time, I might have added more; but to you it would have been unnecessary: you know my wants, you know my disposition, and you know what kind of a man would suit me. In haste I bid you adieu, with assurances of great regard, and sincere friendship, I am, &c.[1]

[1]From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Waskington Papers.*

*To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1785.

Dear Sir: The celebrated Mrs. Macauly Graham.[2] and Mr. Graham her Husband[3] are here on a Visit. As I wish to shew them all the respect I can, I should be glad if you, Mrs. Stuart and your Sister, would come to morrow or next day, and dine with us. I am, etc.

PS Come tomorrow if convenient.[4]

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 10th. of March came safe, but not in a short time after the date of it. The reason which you have assigned for giving me an order on Mr. Ryan, is perfectly satisfactory. I wish that that or any other, expedient would have extracted from him what he owes you. From the Accot. given of his circumstances and conduct I fear you have incurred a bad debt with the manager of the Theatre.

As the large house you was to build for me,[5] was in such forwardness at the date of the above letter, and as you expected to have had it raised by the first of May last; I am very well satisfied with the advance it has made, and that it should continue, provided you can make it convenient to wait a while for your money; but I should be wanting in candor were I to give you assurances of speedy payment. The Kitchen and stable

[2] Catherine Sawbridge Macaulay Graham.

[3] Mrs. Graham's first husband had been Dr. George Macaulay; her second was William Graham.

[4] From a facsimile in *Autograph Letters and Documents of George Washington in Rhode Island Collections, Historical Publication, Number Six,* Providence, R. I., State Bureau of Information, 1932. p. 171.

[5] In Bath, or Warm Springs, Va.

I would gladly have finished as soon as possible and what ever the cost of them amounts to, I will settle for without delay.

It gives me much pleasure to find, by your letter, that you are not less sanguine in your Boat project, than when I saw you last; and that you have made such further discoveries as will render them of greater utility than was at first expected: you have my best wishes for the success of your plan.

Inclosed are the proceedings of the Directors of the Potomac navigation. I pray you to have them set up at some public place. If the manager advertised for, can come *well* recommended, liberal wages will be given him. It were to be wished that the following qualities could be readily combined in the same person, integrity, abilities, indefatigable industry, and if he has not experimental knowledge of this particular kind of work, at least that he may be possessed of a genius which may soon fit him for it.

Mr. Ryan's note is enclosed, and I am with great esteem, Sir, etc.[6]

To WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

Mount Vernon, June 10, 1785.

Sir: It is with grateful pleasure I sit down to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 25th. of March covering a triplicate of your letter of the 3d. of December (which is the first that has been received), and a copy of the Count of Florida Blanca's note to you.

I feel myself under singular obligation to you sir, as the mean of procuring two Jacks of the first race, to be sent me; but my gratitude for so condescending a mark of esteem from one of the first crowned heads in Europe, calls for a better expression than I have, to make suitable acknowledgments to

[6] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

His Catholic Majesty; especially too as his Majesty's very valuable present was accompanied by a sentiment of approbation which cannot fail of making a lasting impression on my mind, and of becoming very dear to my remembrance.

It is to you Sir, I must stand further indebted for the manner of making known in terms most acceptable, the high sense I entertain of the King's goodness. The Jacks are not yet arrived, but I hope they soon will; and the accot. which you mean to transmit, of the mode of treating them for the propagation of mules, will be equally necessary and acceptable, for my management of them.

Mr. Gardoqui is safely arrived at Philada. I have not had the honor of paying my compliments to him; but, as well for the respect I owe his sovereign, and his own great merit, as on acct. of your recommendation of him, I shall be happy in every opportunity which shall offer of shewing him all the attention in my power.

Great Britain, viewing with eyes of chagrin and jealousy the situation of this country, will not, for sometime yet if ever, pursue a liberal policy towards it; but unfortunately *for her* the conduct of her ministers defeat their own ends: their restriction of our trade with them, will facilitate the enlargement of Congressional powers in commercial matters, more than half a century wou'd otherwise have effected. The mercantile interests of this Country are uniting as one man, to vest the federal government with ample powers to regulate trade and to counteract the selfish views of other nations: this may be considered as another proof that this Country will ever unite in opposition to unjust or ungenerous measures, whensoever or from whomsoever they are offered. I have the honor, etc.[7]

[7] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM GODDARD

Mount Vernon, June 11, 1785.

Sir: On the 8th. inst: I received the favor of your letter of the 30th. of May:[8] In answer to it I can only say, that your own good judgment must direct you in the publication of the manuscript papers of Genl. Lee. I can have no request to make concerning the work.

I never had a difference with that Gentleman but on public grounds, and my conduct towards him upon this occasion, was such only, as I conceived myself indispensably bound to adopt in discharge of the public trust reposed in me. If this produced in him unfavourable sentiments of me, I yet can never consider the conduct I pursued, with respect to him, either wrong or improper; however I may regret that it may have been differently viewed by him, and that it excited his censure and animadversions. Should there appear in Genl. Lee's writings any thing injurious or unfriendly to me, the impartial and dispassionate world, must decide how far I deserved it from the general tenor of my conduct.

I am gliding down the stream of life, and wish as is natural, that my remaining Days may be undisturbed and tranquil; and conscious of my integrity, I would willingly hope that nothing would occur tending to give me anxiety; but should any thing present itself in this or any other publication, I shall never undertake the painful task of recrimination, nor do I know that I should ever enter upon my justification. I consider the communication you have made as a mark of great attention, and the whole of your letter as a proof of your esteem. I am, &c.[9]

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[8] This letter is in the *Washington Papers,* as is also the printed prospectus of the proposed publication. Lee bequeathed his papers to Goddard and these were to have formed the basis of the work which Goddard never published.

[9] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To EDMUND RICHARDS

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 1st. of Feby. from Plymouth Dock, came safe. In explicit terms I assure you, that the information which I suppose you must have received respecting a Will, and the plantations of a Mr. Richd. Richards, is without the smallest foundation. I never heard of the man, his Will, or the Estate which you say was left in my hands, until your letter reached me: equally unacquainted am I with Lawyer Haines or Lawr. Briton, consequently can give you no satisfaction in any of the matters requested of me.

If any such event as you speak of ever did happen with any of my name, it is unknown to me, it is not in my power therefore to give you any clue by which you may pursue your enquiries, or I would do it with pleasure. I am, etc.[10]

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 25th. of April, but have not yet had the pleasure of seeing Doctr. Moyes; on the 22d. inst: I shall look for him.

I pray you to be assured that it is unnecessary for you to apologize to me for the introduction of any Gentleman, of whom you entertain a favourable opinion: such as you conceive worthy of my civilities, will always meet a welcome reception at Mt. Vernon.

I shall now my good Sir, give you a little trouble. A Gentleman whose person, whose name,[11] and whose character are

[10] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[11] Charles Vancouver.

equally unknown to me has written me the enclosed letter, to which, as yet I have made no reply. The work if well executed would unquestionably be valuable and ought to be encouraged; but the abilities of the author I am a stranger to, and it has been too often found that similar attempts, by persons whose reputations not established in the literary world, are founded in ignorance, or end in imposition: to encourage the first, or to give sanction to the latter would be alike disagreeable to me. I would beg therefore, if it is not likely to be attended with much trouble, that you would be so obliging as to give your own, and the sentiments of others on the Author and his performance, that I may be enabled to decide properly with respect to his request.

My respectful Compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Mrs. Powel and yourself, and I am, Dr. Sir, etc.[12]

To ROBERT HOWE

Mount Vernon, June 15, 1785.

Dr. Sir: A few days ago Mr. Sitgreaves[13] gave me the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 4th. of May. It is the only one I recollect to have had from you since my return to private life.

It gives me pleasure to hear that Congress have dealt honorably by you, and mean to do more; it is devoutly to be wished that they could do the same by all the officers whose meritorious services and sufferings have a just claim upon their gratitude, and call loudly for their exertions.

[12] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[13] John Sitgreaves. He was a Delegate to the Continental Congress from North Carolina.

As you are at the source of intelligence, anything I could say respecting foreign matters, would only be a reverberation of intelligence; and few things occur of a domestic nature worthy of recital. Mrs. Washington is in tolerable good health and joins me in compliments and best wishes for you, Mr. Lots[14] family, and others of our old acquaintance. I am, etc.[15]

To WILLIAM MINOR

Mount Vernon, June 16, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 14th. is this moment delivered to me. Moral obligations, or the obligations of humanity therefore induced me to bestow a years schooling on Lawce. Posey, and to effect it I was willing to incur the expence of a years board also; the same motives might have induced you, without making a charge of it against me, to have acted a similar part in other respects by the boy; for sure I am, my connexion with him was not stronger, nor legal honorary obligation greater on me than on any other mans to excite them. Schooling, I reiterate in this letter, as I urged in my former, was my object; consequently, if he did not go to the Free School in Queen Anne, (the place designed) as you yourself acknowledged to me, nor to any other School, for what purpose let me ask was I to pay £17? Was not his Fathers house, if time was to be misspent, the best place for him to waste it in? Can it be supposed I ever had it in contemplation to board him out for the purpose of idleness? If then the condition of my letter to Mr. Baker were never complied with, as you candidly confessed to me they were not when here, where is the justice of requiring £17, or an iota of it from me, when the compensation was

[14] Abraham Lott, of New York City.
[15] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

expressly stipulated? But I will be done. I am too much engaged in company and in business to go further into the detail of this matter.

If Genl. Robardeau (whom you mentioned to me yourself in a former letter) will be so obliging as to undertake to determine the point, I shall be perfectly satisfied with his decision. I shall expect however that both this letter, and my former to you which was directed to his care, and such papers as you exhibited to me, will be laid before him, one of which certified that Lawce. Posey was not at the Free school: another, in effect that your charge was antecedent to the date of my letter to Mr. Baker, and a third, from Capt. Posey to you, which will serve to proove that he was a House-Keeper at Rovers-delight (as he call'd his place) at the time you want me to pay you for the boy's board, when he was not at school, nor ever derived the benefit which was the object of my benevolence. I am, etc.[17]

*To THE SECRETARY AT WAR

Mount Vernon, June 18, 1785.

My dear Sir: I am quite ashamed to be so long deficient in acknowledging the receipt of your favors of the 24th. and 29th. of March, and 5th. of May; but an intervention of circumstances (with the enumeration of which I shall not trouble you) have prevented it.

It gave me great pleasure to hear of your appointment as Secretary at War. without a complimt., I think a better choice could not have been made, and though the Salary is low, it may, under the circumstances you mention, be considered as auxiliary. Inclosed is a certificate[18] of Service for Major

[16] Daniel Roberdeau.

[17] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[18] A copy of this certificate, dated June 18, 1785, is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

Sergeant,[19] of whose worth I have a high opinion; but for want of a more competent knowledge of the time of his entering the line of the Army, and of the Commissions he has borne, I could not be more particular. At any time this Summer, the Limestone would be useful to me; but the sooner it comes the greater benefit I shall derive from it, as the Walls for which I want it, are now in hand. The sentiment which you have dropped respecting the appropriation of the shares which were intended for me, by the Assembly of this State, in the Navigations of the Rivers Potomack and James, is very pleasing; and would give me great pleasure to see it reallized.[20]

For want of a competent view of the designs of Congress respecting the Western Territory; and not knowing how matters stand with Great Britain, respecting the Posts of Detroit and other places at present occupied by British Garrisons, on the American side of the Line; I feel an unfitness to answer your question respecting such Posts as may be proper for the purposes you mentioned; but under the ideas I hold at prest, I am inclined to think that if Garrisons are to be established within the limits and jurisdiction of any of the 13 States, the Fort Pitt, or Fort McIntosh,[21] whichever shall be found most convenient and in best repair, would suit very well for a Post of deposits; from whence *all* the others should be supplied. and as it is my opinion that great part of the Fur and Peltry of the Lakes (when we shall have free access to them) will be transported by the Cayahoga and big beaver Creek, a Post at the mouth of, or

[19] Winthrop Sargent.

[20] Knox had written (March 24: "Perhaps my dear Sir you could intimate to the Legislature in a manner which would be clear of every indelicate imputation that should they think proper to apply the produce of this fund to the maintenance of Widows, and the support, and education of the children of those men of their own line who sacrificed their lives in defence of their Country, and of the maimed soldiers, that the measure would rear an eternal monument to the virtue of the Commonwealth of Virginia." Knox's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

[21] On the Ohio River, 25 miles below Pittsburgh, Pa.

at some convenient Post on the former, must be eligable. The spot marked Miami village and Fort in Hutchins's map, I have always considered as of importance, being a central point between Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, and the river Ohio; communicating with each, by Water. To these the Falls of the Ohio, or some more convenient spot for the lower settlements, may be added. Whether this chain embraces territory enough, whether it goes far enough to the Southward to afford protection to the back parts of Virginia the Carolinas and Georgia; or whether these are objects which are meant to be comprehended, are for those who are more behind the Curtain than I am, to determine. My opinion of the matter is, that I have described a sufficient extent of the Country to answer all our *present* purposes; beyond which, neither Settlements nor Locations of Land ought to be admitted; because a larger would open a more extensive field for Land jobbers and Speculators. Weaken our Frontiers. exclude Law, good government, and taxation to a late period. and injure the union very essentially in many respects.

At the conflux of the Great Kanhawa and Ohio, a Post might be established so as to answer beneficial purposes. Indeed it is the opinion of many, that it is a more eligable place than Pittsburg. In time, if the navigation of the Kanhawa should be extended, and an easy communication opened with James River, it may be so; but in the present state of things, considering the Settlements about the latter, and the sources from whence proceed all the Supplies of that Country, it certainly is not. As a protection of the River, and the movements thereon, it is desirable.

If I am right in my principles some such distribution as the following may not be ineligable for the 700 men which are ordered to be raised. At Fort Pitt, Fort McIntosh, or the Mouth

of big Beaver (being in the vicinity of a thick settlemt.) only 100 Men. Cayahoga, from whence a Detachment might occupy the carrying place between that water and big Beaver; being on the line, and most exposed, should have 200. Miami Fort, or Village and Dependencies, Do. Do. 200. At the Falls of the Ohio, or some spot more convt. and healthy, on that river 150. At the Conflux of the Great Kanhawa and Ohio for security of the River, protection of Trade, and covering emigrants, 50. Total 700.

Mrs. Macauly Graham and Mr Graham, and others, have just left this, after a stay of about 10 days. A Visit from a Lady so celebrated in the Literary world could not but be very flattering to me.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for yourself, Mrs. Knox and family; with great truth and sincerity I am etc.

[MS. H. S.]

To BARBÉ MARBOIS

[June 21, 1785]

Sir: The last Post brought me the honor of your favor of the 12th. inst: I am made happy by occasions which induce you to write to me, and shall take pleasure in rendering Mr. De Corney[22] any service in my power. I will immediately inform myself of the name and residence of the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati in this State, and transmit Mr. De Corney's Bill on Colo. Wadsworth[23] to him.

I am obliged to you Sir, for the several communications in your letter. I wish something disagreeable may not result from the contentions respecting the navigation of the river Mississippi; the emigration to the waters thereof is astonishingly

[22] Louis Dominique Ethis de Corny.
[23] Jeremiah Wadsworth.

great, and chiefly from a description of people who are not very subordinate to the Laws and Constitution of the States they go from; whether the prohibition of the Spaniards therefore is just or unjust, politic or impolitic, it will be with difficulty that a people of this class can be restrained from the enjoyment of natural advantages. It is devoutly to be wished that Mr. Gardoqui would enter into such stipulations with Congress as may avert the impending evil, and be mutually advantageous to both nations.

After the explicit declarations of the Emperor respecting the navigation of the Scheldt, and his other demands upon Holland, it should seem I think, as if he stood in a predicament not very desirable; for if he recedes, his foresight and judgment may be arraigned; and if he proceeds, his ruin may be involved. But possibly I am hazarding Sentiments from a superficial view of things, when it will appear ultimately that he has had important objects in view, and accomplished them.

I take the liberty of addressing the enclosed letter to your care, and to assure you of the respect and esteem with which I have the honor, etc.[24]

To JOHN RUMNEY[25]

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for two letters, one of the 8th. of September, the other of the 9th. of Feby., the first should not have remained so long unacknowledged, but for the expectation I had of the second, the second led me to expect a third, upon the receipt of which I meant to give you but one trouble by replying to them all at the same time.

[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The original of this letter is said to be (1934) in the Historical Museum, Leningrad, U. S. S. R.

[25] Of Whitehaven, England.

Permit me to thank you Sir, for your attention to my Commissions: the joiner arrived safe, and I believe will fully answer your description and expectation of him; he gives great satisfaction, and seems well satisfied himself. The expence of his passage, and your advance to him, has been paid to Mr. Sanderson.[26]

I delayed making choice of either of the samples of Flagstone, until I had seen the Irish marble, and was made acquainted with the cost of it; but as it is not yet arrived, and I like the whitest and cheapest of the three samples wch. you sent me by Capt. Atkinson, I request the favor of you to forward by the first opportunity (with some to spare in case of breakage or other accidents) as much of this kind as will floor the Gallery in front of my house, which within the margin, or border that goes round it, and is already laid with a hard stone of the Country, is 92 feet 7½ inches, by 12 feet 9¼ inches.

Having given the exact dimension of the floor or space which is to be laid with flagstone, I shall leave it to the workman to procure them of such a size (not less than one floot square, and all of one size) as will answer best, and accord most with the taste of the times. I take it for granted that 7½d of 8d is the price of the white Stone in the prepared state in which it was sent, and that shipping charges and freight only, are to be added to the cost: if a rough estimate of the latter had been mentioned, it would have been more pleasing, as I could then have prepared accordingly.

I am at a loss to determine in what manner these dressed Flags can be brought without incurring much expence, or being liable to great damage: to put them in Cases, will involve the first; and to stow them loose, the other may be sustained; unless great care is used in the stowage, which is rarely to be found among Sailors, or even Masters of Vessels. If the Flags

[26] Robert Sanderson, Rumney's partner.

are well dressed, a little matter will chip the edges, and break the corners; which would disfigure the work and be hurtful to the eye. I will give no direction therefore on this head, your own judgment on the spot shall dictate; at the same time I have but little doubt, if they are placed in the hold of the Ship with hay or straw to keep them from rubing, of their coming free from damage.

I will soon follow this letter with a remittance from hence, or draft upon London for a sum to enable you to discharge the undertaker. In the mean while let me pray you to hasten the execution and Shipping of them, as my Gallery is very much in want. With great esteem, etc.[27]

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Since my last to you I have been favored with your letters of the 5th, 27th, and —— of May, and beg your acceptance of my thanks for their enclosures, and for the communications you were pleased to make me therein.

I am very glad to find you have pass'd an Ordinance of Congress respecting the sale of the Western Lands: I am too well acquainted with the local politics of individual States, not to have foreseen the difficulties you met with in this business; these things are to be regretted, but not to be altered until liberallity of sentiment is more universal. Fixing the Seat of Empire at any spot on the Delaware, is in my humble opinion, demonstrably wrong: to incur an expence for what may be call'd the *permanent* seat of Congress, at this time, is I conceive evidently impolitic; for without the gift of prophecy, I will venture to predict that under any circumstance of

[27] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

confederation, it will not remain so far to the Eastward long; and that until the public is in better circumstances, it ought not to be built at all. Time, too powerful for sophistry, will point out the place and disarm localities of their power. In the meanwhile let the widow, the Orphan and the suffering Soldier, who are crying to you for their dues, receive *that* which can very well be rendered to them.

There is nothing new in this quarter of an interesting nature, to communicate, unless you should not have been informed that the Potomac navigation proceeds under favourable auspices: At the general meeting of the subscribers in May last, it appeared that upwards of 400 of the 500 shares had been engaged; many more have been subscribed since; a Board of Directors have been chosen, proper characters and Labourers advertized for, to commence the work in the least difficult parts of the river, 'till a skillful Engineer can be engaged to undertake those which are more so; and it is expected the work will be begun by the 10th. of next month. With great esteem, &c.[28]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I stand indebted to you for your favors of the 3d, 7th, and 29th. of last month, and feel myself exceedingly obliged to your Excellency for the communications and enclosures therein.

It gives me pleasure to find that an Ordinance of Congress has passed respecting the Western Territory: A little longer delay of this business, and I believe the Country would have been settled, maugre all that could have been done to prevent it; as it is, I am not clear that the same respect will be paid *now*

[28] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

to this Ordinance, which would have been at an earlier period, before men began to speculate in Lands No. West of the Ohio, and to obtrude themselves thereon.

From the general tenor of my letters from very respectable characters in France, I think it most likely that the dispute between the Emperor and Holland will be settled without bloodshed, and that the former will hardly be able to effect the exchange of his Northerland Dominions for the Dutchy of Bavaria; among other reasons, because the Duke of Deux Ponts,[29] nephew and heir to the Elector is opposed thereto: but notwithstanding that, the state of politic's and temper of some of the formidable Powers of Europe are such as to place war at no remote distance.

I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. Macauly Graham, who after a stay of about ten days, left this in order to embark for England, from New York: I am obliged to you for introducing a Lady to me whose reputation among the literati is high, and whose principles are so much and so justly admired by the friends of liberty and of mankind; it gives me pleasure to find that her sentiments respecting the inadequacy of the powers of Congress, as also those of Doctr. Price's, coincide with my own; experience evinces the truth of these observations, and the late movements of the mercantile interest exhibits a recent proof of the conviction it is working in the popular mind: but it is unfortunate for us, that evils which might have been averted, must be first felt; and our national character for wisdom, justice and temperance, suffer in the eyes of the world, before we can guide the political machine as it ought to be.

The plan for improving and extending the navigation of this river, is in a promising way: inclosed I do myself the

[29] Charles II, Duke of Zweibrücken.

honor of sending you the printed proceedings of the Board of Directors.

Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments and every good wish for you, and with great esteem etc.[30]

To RICHARD BOULTON

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1785.

Mr. Boulton: Your letter of the 4th. inst:[31] never reached me until Monday last. I do not enter into agreements, but with an intention of fulfilling them; and I expect the same punctuality on the part of those with whom they are made: and you must therefore perform your's with me, or abide the consequences.

The reason which you assign for not coming is futile and can have no weight with your creditors; your property and your labour are all means with which you can satisfy them; a mortgage or bill of sale of the first; and an order on me by way of security of the latter as your wages shall arise, is all they can desire (if your Tools are unsaleable) and these are in your power to give them.

You know the purposes for which I engaged you, and that they are important and urgent: that I waited a considerable time after Colo. Fitzhugh had recommended you to me, without applying elsewhere, for your answer; that near a month more has elapsed since our agreement took place; that the season is now far advanced, and workmen consequently so much engaged as not to be procured; In the meanwhile, the roof of my house yields to every rain, and the furniture in no

[30] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

As printed in the *Memoir of Richard Henry Lee*, this letter contained the following P. S., not recorded in the "Letter Book": "Col. Wm. Brent died two or three days ago. Your son Ludwell was well at our court yesterday."

[31] In the *Washington Papers*.

part of it is secure from the injuries which result therefrom. These reasons will fully justify my holding you to the engagement we have entered into, and I expect you will enter upon the performance of it without delay. I am, etc.[32]

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me on the 10th. inst: came duly to hand, and calls for my particular acknowledgments; and my grateful thanks for your obliging offers.

Altho' I conceive that the sunken Lands lying on Albermarle sound, and the waters emptying into it, will in time become the most valuable property in this Country; yet when I reflect further, that it will require a considerable advance to reclaim and render them fit for cultivation, and in the meantime that they may be subjected to expences; I believe it would be most advisable for me, in my situation not to add to my present expenditures; but I am so much obliged by your friendly offer to serve me in this matter, as if they had actually been rendered. If your Excellency could make it convenient to give me the substance of the report of the Commrs., respecting the place and manner which are thought best for a cut between the waters of Elizabeth river and those of North Carolina, I should think myself obliged: the improving and extending the inland navigation of the waters of this Country, are in my judgment very interesting to the well being and glory of it, and I am always pleased with any accounts which seem to facilitate those important objects. With great esteem etc.[32]

[32] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS MONTGOMERIE[33]

Mount Vernon, June 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: In the evening of yesterday, I was favored with your letter of the 21st.; and thank you for your early and friendly attention to the enquiry I made of you.

I do not now recollect whether I was so explicit as perhaps I ought to have been in communicating all the purposes for which I wanted an assistant: they are these. A Gentleman who can compose a good letter from the heads which shall be given to him; do all other writing which shall be entrusted to his care; keep accounts; examine, arrange and properly methodize my papers (which from hasty removals into the interior country, are in great disorder); ride, at my expence, to do such business as I may have in different parts of this, or the other States, if I should find it more convenient to send than attend myself to the execution thereof; and occasionally to devote a small portion of time to initiate two little children (a Girl of six, and a boy of four years of age, descendants of the decd. Mr. Custis who live with me and are very promising, and whom I would not wish to confine) in the first rudiments of Education.

A fit person who inclines to accept these employments, will live as I do, be company for those who visit at the House, have his washing and mending found him, and such wages as we can agree upon; which I must be candid in declaring can not be high, as my finances and expenditures will not admit of it.

If you think Mr. Shaw[34] competent to these ends and find him disposed to be employed for them I wish to know it by the return of the Post, as there are others offering. If he would

[33] Of Dumfries, Va.

[34] William Shaw. He acted as a secretary from July, 1785, to May, 1786.

write to me, or to you upon the subject, the letter in the latter case to be enclosed to me, I could form some judgment of his hand writing and diction: he will please to signify the lowest wages which he will take per ann: or quarterly. If he chooses a personal interview, which perhaps may be more agreeable, I should be glad to see him here, with some samples of his writing. With great esteem, etc.[35]

To REVEREND STEPHEN BLOOMER BALCH

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1785.

Sir: My nephews are desirous of going to the Dancing School in Georgetown kept by Mr. Tarterson (I think his name is), and as it is my wish that they should be introduced into life with those qualifications which are deemed necessary, I consent to it. Sometime ago I expressed my approbation of their learning French, and a wish that when you had got your House in order to receive them, they might again board with you: Altho' I have no occasion [*sic*] the care, attention and kindness of Mr. Bailey[36] to them, I conceive they can board at no place so eligably as at their Preceptors; for it is my wish that their morals as well as education may be attended to; and tho' I do not desire they should be deprived of necessary and proper amusements, yet it is my earnest request that they may be kept close to their studies. I am, etc.[35]

To THOMAS MONTGOMERIE

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I received your favor of the 28th. last night. I was under promise when I wrote to you on the 25th. of giving an

[35] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[36] William Bailey, of Georgetown.

answer to an application which had been made to me, in a few days before, which are now nearly expired: that I may be decisive on it, I should be glad to know precisely what Mr. Shaw would expect for his services if he comes to me; for altho' I cannot as I observed in my last, afford to give high pay on the one hand, so neither would I, by any means, leave it indefinite on the other: whatever stipulations I enter into, shall be strictly complied with; which will leave no cause for discontent. I am the more explicit in these declarations because I am apprehensive that higher pay is expected from me than I can afford to give. Mr. Shaw undoubtedly has set a value upon his (those wch. are to be rendered) services, he knows what he has received for former services; It is not reasonable to expect that any Gentleman will lessen his prospects by coming to me, nor do I desire it. I do not expect him for less than he can obtain elsewhere; but if my means will not enable me to give as much, I must do without, or get one less capable of assisting me.

Another thing in Mr. Shaw's proposals is not very agreeable to me: if a Gentn. does not engage with me for *some fixed time,* I may in a month, nay less, be put to a greater non-plus than ever, which would be inconvenient, and perhaps injurious to me, short engagements and early notice of discontinuance might answer the purpose of Mr. Shaw, and remove my difficulties.

That matters may be reduced to a certainty, and I enabled to give the answer above alluded to, in time, I send this by a special messenger. I am obliged to attend the Board of Directors in Alexandria tomorrow; but whether I shall be detained there longer is at present uncertain; I should be glad therefore if it is convenient, to see Mr. Shaw here this evening, or on Saturday, or at Alexandria tomorrow, when upon a little

conversation we can readily determine whether our purposes can be reciprocally answered.

He will not, indeed cannot, be considered in the light of a preceptor, because this as I observed in my last, is only occasional and secondary. I am, etc.[37]

To THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

My Lady: In the last letter which I had the honor to write to you, I informed your Ladyship of the communication I had made to the President of Congress of your wishes to obtain Lands in the Western Territory for a number of Emigrants as a means of civilizing the Savages, and propagating the Gospel among them. In answer, he informed me that Mr. Henry, Governor of this State, had laid your Ladyships letter and plan which were addressed to him, before Congress, in a full and ample manner; but his *private* opinion of the matter was, that under the pressure of Debt to which this fund was to be appropriated, and the diversity of sentiment respecting the mode of applying it, that no discrimination would, or indeed could be made in favor of Emigrants of any description whatsoever. I waited however a considerable time to know the result of Mr. Henry's reference, before I would give your Ladyship the trouble of another letter on this subject; but hearing nothing more of the matter, and having had the enclosed resolutions and ordinance sent to me by the President himself, as the result of their long and painful deliberation on the mode of disposing of the Western Lands, I will delay no longer to express my concern that your Ladyships

[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

humane and benevolent views are not better seconded. The resolutions and ordinance herewith enclosed (on which I shall make no comments) will give the terms and shew your Ladyship the mode by which the Lands belonging to the Union are to be obtained; in other words, how difficult it must be for foreigners to know when or where to apply for them. With the highest respect and consideration, etc.[38]

To WILLIAM WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: My nephew[39] delivered me your letter of the 21st. of April. For the kind attention shewn him by Mrs. Washington and yourself he entertains a grateful sense, and I offer you my sincere thanks, which I should be glad to renew to you both in person at this place. He enjoys a tolerable share of health, but is gone to (what are called in his Country) the Sweet Springs, to obtain a better stock to fit him for the pleasures, and duties too, of a matrimonial voyage on wch. he is to embark at his return.

I would thank you my good Sir, for the Acorns, Nutts, or seeds of trees or plants not common in this Country; but which you think would grow here, especially of the flowering kind: the best method, I believe, to preserve those which are apt to spoil by withering and drying, and from worms, is to put them into dry Sand as soon as they are gathered; this retains the moisture in them, and vegitative properties, without sprouting.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best respects to you and your Lady, and I am etc.[38]

[38] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[39] George Augustine Washington.

To WILLIAM BLAKE

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Sir: By my nephew I had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th. Mar: accompanied with some plants and Seeds of the Palmetto royal, for which I pray you to accept my sincere thanks: the former are not only alive yet, but look vigorous; and the latter (being sowed) are vegitating, and appearing above ground. I shall nurse them with great attention.

It would give me great pleasure to visit my friends in So. Carolina: but when, or whether ever it may be in my power to accomplish it, is not, at this moment, in my power to decide. I have the honor, etc.[40]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: When I wrote you in Feby. last, I intended to have followed it with a letter of earlier date than the present; but one cause succeeding another, has prevented it 'till now.

I proceeded to a diligent search for the paper requested in your favor of the 23d. of August last year, and after examining every bundle, and indeed despairing of success, it occurred to me that your accot. with Lord Fairfax might afford some clue by which a discovery of it might be made; and in looking in your ledger for an index I found the receipts pasted on the cover of the Book. Having a call to Richmond the latter end of April, I took the receipts with me intending to leave them in the hands of the Attorney General; but it being his opinion there would be no occasion for them, I brought them back, and restored them to the place from whence I took them: the

[40] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

enclosed are copies of those receipts, which I meant should supply the place of the originals, had they passed from me to the Attorney.

I have not yet received the Pictures which you were so obliging as to send me by Mr. Bracken; but have some prospect now of getting them, as Colo. Bassett who left this lately and who expects to be up again in Octor. to the marriage of his Daughter who lives with us, with a son of my brother Charles (who acted as an Aid de Camp to the Marqs. de la Fayette from the year 1780, to the close of the War) has promised to bring them. Altho' I have been so long deprived of the copy, I have lately had the pleasure of seeing the original in the hands of the designer and executioner Mr. Pine, who spent three weeks with me in May last.

Mr. Pine has met a favorable reception in this Country; and may, I conceive, command as much business as he pleases: he is now preparing materials for historical representations of some of the most important events of the War; and if his choice and the execution is equal to the field he has to display his talents in, the pieces (which will be large) will do him much credit as an artist, and be interesting for America and its friends as a deposit for their posterity.

The information which you have given of the disposition of a certain Court coincides precisely with the sentiments I had formed of it from my own observations upon many late occurrences, and from a combination of circumstances. With respect to ourselves, I wish I could add, that as much wisdom had pervaded our councils; as reason and common policy most evidently dictated; but the truth is, the people must *feel* befor they will *see;* consequently, are brought slowly into measures of public utility. Past experience, or the admonitions of a few, have but little weight, where ignorance, selfishness

and design possess the major part: but evils of this nature work their own cure; tho' the remedy comes slower than those who foresee, or think they foresee the danger, attempt to effect. With respect to the commercial system which G: B: is pursuing with this country, the Ministers, in this as in other matters, are defeating their own ends, by facilitating those powers in congress which will produce a counteraction of their plans, and which half a century without, would not have invested that body with. The restriction of our trade, and the additional duties which are imposed upon many of our staple commodities, have put the commercial people of this Country in motion; they now see the indispensable necessity of a general *controuling* power, and are addressing their respective Assemblies to grant this to Congress. Before this every State thought itself competent to regulate its own Trade, and were verifying the observations of Lord Sheffield; who supposed we never could agree upon any general plan: but those who will go a little deeper into matters, than his Lordship seems to have done, will readily perceive that in any measure where the Fœderal interest is touched, however wide apart the politics of individual States may be, yet as soon as it is discovered they will always unite to effect a common good.

The Subscriptions for improving and extending the inland navigation of Potomac, have filled very fast: A Company is incorporated, a President and Directors are chosen, a Dividend of the money will soon be paid in, and the work will begin about the first of August. We still want a skilful Engineer, a man of practical knowledge to conduct the business; but where to find him we know not at present: In the meanwhile the less difficult parts of the river will be attempted, that no time may be lost in effecting so important and salutary an undertaking.

Our course of Husbandry in this Country, and more especially in this State, is not only exceedingly unprofitable, but so destructive to our Lands, that it is my earnest wish to adopt a better; and as I believe no Country has carried the improvement of Land and the benefits of Agriculture to greater perfection than England, I have asked myself frequently of late, whether a thorough bred *practical* english Farmer, from a part of England where Husbandry seems to be best understood and is most advantageously practised, could not be obtain'd? and upon what terms? The thought having again occurred to me, whilst I was in the act of writing this letter, I resolved as a more certain and eligible mode of having the questions determined, to propound them to you. That a man of character and knowledge may be had for *very high wages* there can be no doubt, money we know will fetch anything, and command the services of any man; but with the former I do not abound. To engage a man upon shares as the Overseers of this Country are, might be productive of much discontent to the employed; for we could scarcely convey to a good English Farmer a just idea of the wretched condition of our Lands, what dressings they will require, and how entirely our system must be changed to make them productive: and if we do not, disappointment and continual murmurings would be the consequence. It follows then that the only means by which we can think of obtaining one, must be to give standing wages: for what then my good Sir, do you think a sober, industrious and knowing Farmer might be had to take one of our plantations, say, of ten labourers? Or to bring the matter nearer to his own conception of things, a Farm of about 200 or 250 acres of cleared Land, to be stocked with a competent number of Plows, Black Cattle, Sheep and hogs?

When I speak of a knowing farmer, I mean one who understands the best course of crops; how to plough, to sow, to mow, to hedge, to Ditch and above all, Midas like, one who can convert every thing he touches into manure, as the first transmutation towards Gold: in a word one who can bring worn out and gullied Lands into good tilth in the shortest time. I do not mean to put you to the trouble of actually engaging one, but I should be obliged to you for setting on foot the enquiry, and for communicating the result of it to me; because I could not receive your answer in time for the next year; the autumn being, as you well know, the season at which our Overseers are engaged, and our plans for the ensuing Crop must be formed.

These enquiries, as you will readily perceive, are pointed to a Farmer of the middling class; which more than probably, would best answer my purpose: but, if it could be made convenient to you to extend enquiries further; permit me to ask if one of a higher order could be had? And upon what terms? I mean for a Steward.

It may not in this place be amiss to observe to you that I still decline the growth of Tobacco; and to add, that it is my intention to raise as little Indian Corn as may be: in a word, that I am desirous of entering upon a compleat course of husbandry as practiced in the best Farming Counties of England. I enquire for a man of this latter description with little hope of success. 1st. because I believe one who is compleatly fit for my purposes, wou'd be above my price; and 2dly because I have taken up an idea that an English steward is not so much a farmer, as he is an Attorney or an accomptant; because few of the Nobility and Gentry having their Estates in their own hands, stand more in need of a Collector who, at the same time that he receives the rents, will see that the Covenants of the Leases are complied with, repairs made &c., &c., than of a

Farmer. In this however I may be mistaken. One thing more and then I will close this long letter: if from your own observation, or from good information you should fix your eyes upon men of one or both of these descriptions, and could ascertain his or their terms (leaving me at liberty to accede to them or not, within a reasonable time for an intercourse by letter), I had rather he or they should be personally known to you; or their characters well ascertained by a friend in whom you can confide; because what you or such a person would say of them, I could rely upon: but how often do we find recommendations given without merit to deserve them, founded in a disposition to favor the applicant, or want of resolution to refuse them, oftentimes indeed, to get rid of a dependent who is troublesome or injurious to us, upon what are *called* decent terms. A man in the character of a Steward (if single, and his appearance equal to it) would live in the House with me and be at my table, in the manner Lund Washington was accustomed to do, who is now married[41] and a House Keeper tho' still attending my business. The common Farmer would live on the Farm which would be entrusted to his care.

I have lately had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 19th. of March, and to learn by it that Mrs. Fairfax and you have enjoyed better health than usual, last winter: a continuance of it Mrs. Washington and I most sincerely wish you.

I have not yet seen Mr. Thos. Corbin, he sent your letter under cover a few days ago with assurances of making me a visit as soon as he had recovered from a slight indisposition. He appears from your account to have been very ill treated by his brother Dick; but the latter I understand has not been behind him in charges to some of his friends in this country, who think Thos. in the wrong.

[41] He had married Elizabeth Foote in 1782.

Mrs. Washington joins me in most affectionate regards, and in every good wish for you and Mrs. Fairfax, with much truth I am, &c.

P.S. I thank Mr. Heartley[42] for the compliments he sent me thro' you, and for his other polite attentions to me; and pray you to make mine acceptable to him whenever a proper occasion offers. I did not know of your Nephew's intended trip to England or I would most assuredly have written to you by so good an opportunity.[43]

To CHARLES VANCOUVER

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785.

Sir: Your favor of the 16th. of last month came safely to hand.

You do me much honor by proposing to inscribe a work (of which you sent me a specimen) to my special patronage and protection: but tho' willing to give every support to the encouragement of literature and useful knowledge, which may be within my sphere of action; yet, on the present occasion I must beg leave to decline the honor of having your labors dedicated to me. With chearfulness I will follow the subscriptions (wch. I presume must 'ere this, be pretty well advanced) of Gentn. of my acquaintance; and with a proper sense of the distinction meant for me, I am, etc.[43]

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, July 2, 1785.

Sir: Early in last month I wrote you an answer to your letter of March 10th., and sent it under cover to my brother in

[42] David Hartley.

[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

Berkeley, who happened at that time to be from home: the presumption is however, that you have received it 'ere this, and I shall not trouble you with a repetition of the sentiments therein contained.

In that letter I enclosed you a hand Bill of the proceedings of the Board of Directors,[44] containing an advertisement of their want of a Manager, two Assistants, some Overseers, and a number of Labourers; requesting that it might be exposed at some public place in the county where you live: those of the two first descriptions were required to meet the Directors at Alexandria on yesterday; but whether the notice was too short, or that characters who are competent to the business are difficult to be met with, I shall not take upon me to determine; but none appearing with such testimonials of their abilities, industry and integrity, as the Board conceived indispensably necessary for their justification, no agreement was made, but the 14th. inst. appointed for them and others, to produce such, of their qualification for this business.

As I have imbibed a very favorable opinion of your mechanical abilities, and have had no reason to distrust your fitness in other respects; I took the liberty of mentioning your name to the Directors, and I dare say if you are disposed to offer your services, they would be attended to under favourable circumstances: but as this is a business of great magnitude, and good or ill impressions in the commencement of it will have a powerful effect on the minds of the Adventurers, and on the public opinion; and as the Directors are no more than Trustees of the Company, and of consequence must proceed circumspectly; Candour obliges me to observe to you, as I believe some of those who will meet for the purpose of appointing a Manager and Assistants have only a superficial

[44] Of the Potomac Company.

acquaintance with you, that it might be well, if you incline to offer your services, to bring some letters or other credential of your industry &c., and if these were to come from members of the Company they would have the greater weight.

Colo. Gilpin[45] (one of the Directors, and who is the bearer of this letter) is on his way to the Falls of Seneca and Shenandoah; and it would be fortunate if he shou'd meet with you in this trip. I am, etc.[46]

*To ROBERT HANSON HARRISON

Mount Vernon, July 3, 1785.

Dear Sir: In the interval, between your leaving this and the arrival of Mr. Briscoe,[47] Mr. Montgomerie (of Dumfries) recommended a young man whom he thought would answer my purpose; and being desired to speak to him, he accepted my offer and will be with me in the course of a few days. Had it not been for this, the good character given of Mr. Briscoe by you, and others, would have induced me, without hestitation to have accepted his Services. I thank you very sincerely for the ready and early attention you paid to my enquiries, to assure you of the great esteem and regard I have for you, is unnecessary, because you must be convinced of it. I shall only add therefore that I am, etc.[48]

To WILLIAM SHAW

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 4th. I receiv'd on the 6th. Altho' the sum stipulated is above the mark I had prescribed myself yet,

[45] George Gilpin.
[46] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[47] William Brisco.
[48] From the original in the *House of Representatives Collection*, Library of Congress.

in consideration of the good character given of you by Mr. Montgomerie, the idea I entertain of your knowledge of Accots., and the hope that you may answer my purposes in other respects; I accede fully to the terms of your letter, with this condition only, that in payment of this sum, Dollars shall be estimated at four and six pence Sterling, and other Gold and Silver coin (currt. in this country) in that proportion. This is the legal difference of exchange of it, and will render it unnecessary for either of us to enquire into the rise or fall, to ascertain the value of any payment.

I do not request you to come hither before the time mentioned in your letter; but should be glad if you would not exceed it.

With esteem and regard, I am, etc.[49]

To THOMAS CORBIN

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1785.

Sir: Yesterday afternoon I had the honor to receive your favor of the 24th. of June; covering a letter from Colo. Fairfax of Bath, dated in Mar: last. The latter speaks of the injurious treatment you have met with, and of the aspersion of your character in England, for which I am exceedingly sorry; but as he draws no conclusion, and your letter is silent, I am a little at a loss to discover the tendency of the information of them to me; and therefore shall only add that whenever it is convenient and agreeable to you to come into this part of the Country, I shall be glad to see you at this place, and that, I am, etc.[49]

[49] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, July 9, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Dohrman[50] who does me the honor of presenting this letter to your Excellency, is represented to me as a Gentleman of great merit; and one who has rendered most benevolent and important Services to the injured Sons of America, at a period when our Affairs did not wear the most favorable aspect.

He has some matters to lay before Congress which he can explain better than I. the justice due to which, and his sufferings, need no advocate; but I take the liberty nevertheless of introducing him to your countenance and civilities. With great respect etc.[51]

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 9th. of Feby. was long on its passage to me; but my answer would not have been delayed 'till now, had not much time been spent in obtaining the several enclosures herewith sent you: a very necessary voucher however, viz: the British King's proclamation, properly authenticated, forbiding the settlement of the Western Lands, in defiance of which the Defendants took possession of the Land which was surveyed for military service, is not yet come to hand, but shall be sent as soon as it does.

The signature to Posey's Bond has the best proof of the handwriting I can obtain without incurring much trouble and expence: there are numbers in this part of the Country, where

[50] Arnold Henry Dorham.

[51] From the *Papers of the Continental Congress,* no. 78, vol. 8, fol. 211.

he formerly lived, who are well acquainted with his hand writing; but these are far removed from the Executive of the State, or any of the judges of the Supreme Court of this Commonwealth. To me, I confess the proof seems unnecessary; for in my judgment there can be no higher evidence of the authenticity of the Bond, than the recognition of it in the Grant which, if I mistake not, expressly declares that it is granted to me as Assignee of John Posey; consequently this Government must have been satisfied of the legality of the assignment, and such as would warrant the Patent granted me thereon.

I transmit you the act of our Assembly passed in the session of 1779, properly authenticated, in which is included all the Law relative to the present subject: in this you will find upon what footing settlement and pre-emption rights are placed; and what are the requisites necessary for rendering them valid. It is very certain the Defendants have not taken those necessary steps pointed out by the Law, in order to give them a title by settlement or pre-emption: they knew that the Land had been surveyed for me; that it was always called mine; that one Cabbin if no more was built upon it when they came there, and they were repeatedly forwarned from settling themselves there during the life of Mr. Crawford. Being thus apprized that their claim was contested, they should have submitted it to the decision of the Commissioners sent out to that Country for the special purpose of adjusting all such disputed titles; and altho' the jurisdiction of these Commrs. only extended to unpatented Lands, yet such a submission was necessary on the part of the Defendants, that they might obtain Certificates and act agreeably to the direction of the Law: as they failed to do this, I conceive they have precluded themselves from setting up a title by occupancy at this day: I say they failed

to make this submission; because as I was never summoned to litigate their claim, any proceeding therein without such a process would have been illegal.

I expect that one objection to my title will be, that this Land was not surveyed by a County Surveyor, but only by one invested with a special commission for surveying the 200,000 acres which were given as a bounty to the 1st. Va. regiment. But you will find that my case comes fully within the first clause of the Law; and as this Survey was covered with a military warrant, such as is mentioned in the Act, no person could more legally have made it than Mr. Crawford. I will observe here, that at the time this survey was *returned* to the Office, Mr. Crawford was Deputy surveyor to Mr. Lewis. You will observe by a subsequent clause in the Law, that all locations made by Officers and Soldiers upon the Lands of actual settlers, shall be void; but this cannot operate against me for several reasons: in the first place it is confined merely to Locations, and cannot extend to Patents; secondly, admitting that my survey was made lawfully, then it is evident that instead of being intruded upon, the Defendants themselves were the intruders: and thirdly, setting my survey and Patent out of the question, I was the prior occupant and entitled to at least 1400 acres, admitting only one Cabbin to have been built; altho' I believe, and Capt. Crawford in letters which I left with you expressly declares it, there were more; so that whichever way you view their title, it appears to be defective. From what cause I know not, but I believe Capt. Posey's warrant is dated subsequent to the return of the Survey made by Mr. Crawford, and if I remember right the recital in the Patent which you have makes this appear; I apprize you of this lest any handle should be made of it by your Opponents.

The only difficulty which can arise in the prosecution of the ejectments in my conception (if my *legal* title shou'd be thought insufficient, which I scarcely think possible) is to prove the *extent* of my improvement before the Defendants took possession of the Land, and the warnings wch. they received afterwards to quit it.

Colo. Crawford who transacted my business in your County, or his Brother Val[52] could have placed these matters in a clear point of view, as I dare say many others are able to do, if I knew who to fix upon and how to come at them; but never having an idea that it was necessary, and the removal of persons &c., may give some trouble.

To ease you as much as I am able of this, I have in a paper enclosed, put down the ground and supports of my title under all circumstances as they have occurred to me; and the plea which I suppose will be urged in behalf of my Opponents in opposition thereto.

I feel myself under great obligation to Mr. Wilson[53] for signifying a readiness to serve me in this suit, because I am satisfied motives of friendship more than of interest were at the bottom. His attendance in Congress must now render this impracticable if it were ever so necessary; but to me the case seems so clear and self evident, that I think nothing more is necessary but to state facts: however, as you understand the decision of your Courts better than I do, I leave it wholly to yourself to call in assistance or not, and from whom you please. I should be glad to know when you think the cause will come to issue: if I could be morally certain of the time and nothing of greater importance should happen to prevent it, I would be in the Western Country at that time. I am, etc.

[52] Valentine Crawford.
[53] James Wilson.

P. S: Since writing the above I have received an attested Copy of the Proclamation alluded to in the body of this letter, which with the letter enclosing it, from our Attoy. General, I send. On a cursory reading of it, (for I was obliged to enclose it almost in the same instant I received it) it may be doubted, I think, whether military Locations beyond the sources of the rivers running into the Atlantic, do not come under the general restrictions: to remove this objection, if it should be made, I will endeavor to obtain an attested copy of an order of the Governor and Council of this Dominion, recognizing the right of the Troops of this State, to Lands under the aforesaid Proclamation; and directing surveys thereof to be made on the Western Waters; tho' I fear it will be difficult to come at, as I have understood that the records of the privy Council had fallen into the hands of the Enemy, or were otherwise lost.[54]

To ALEXANDER WHITE[55]

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Fraunces's[56] letters to you and to me, the last of which I also enclose for your perusal, are so expressive of his want as to render it unnecessary for me to add ought, on the occasion of them.

He has been considered (tho' confined within the british lines) as a friend to our cause: It is said he was remarkably attentative to our prisoners in the City of New York; supporting them, as far as his means would allow, in the hour of their

[54] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[55] Member of the Virginia House of Delegates from 1782 to 1786 and from 1799 to 1801; Member of Congress from 1789 to 1793; one of the Board of Commissioners for the District of Columbia from 1795 to the abolition of the Board in 1802.

[56] Samuel Fraunces.

greatest distress: this it is which lead both Governor Clinton and myself to countenance and support him; and is the cause I presume of his applying, thro' me, to you, and must be my apology for giving you the trouble of this letter.

With respect to his demand against the Estate of Genl. Lee, I know nothing; his letter, to the best of my recollection, is the first intimation I ever had of his being a Creditor; the propriety and justice therefore of the claim must speak for themselves, and will no doubt have their due weight: the *time* of payment seems interesting to him.

The subject of this letter reminds me of an accot. of my own against Genl. Lee's Estate, which I put into your hands at the Springs last year.[57] With great esteem I am, etc.[58]

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH[59]

Mount Vernon, July 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 4th. came to me on the 12th: at the time of writing it you could not have received my letter dated in the latter part of June, covering one for Richard Boulton; not knowing how, otherwise, to get one to him, I took the liberty of addressing it to your care.

In that letter I informed him, that if he did not immediately enter upon the execution of his Contract, I would put the penalty thereof in force: but from the abandoned course in which he seems to have engaged, from your last letter; and

[57] In Washington's "Ledger B" is the following account against Gen. Charles Lee: "1775, Jan. 4. To Cash lent him at Mt Vernon £15. June. To Ditto lent him on the Road from Phila. to Cambridge, at different times, viz. 6 Guineas & 4 dollars 9:12—. 1786, Decr. 28. By Cash recd of Alexr White Esqr. Exr. to Genl Lee by the hands of Mr. Lear 24:12:—"

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[59] Of Patuxent, Md.

his unwillingness to forsake his associates in drunkeness, I do not choose (altho' the disappointment occasions me the loss of a summer) to be concerned with him, lest his bad example should have an unfavorable influence upon my workmen, of which I have several. I beg therefore, if my letter to him has not been forwarded, that you would be so obliging as to destroy it.

As I am not in immediate want of the Articles which you were so good as to offer me, I had rather take the chance of a water conveyance round, than to send my waggon to Colo. Platers: but as this may not happen soon, and it is unreasonable to keep you out of the cost of them; if you will ascertain the quantity and price of such as you can best spare, I will pay the amount to your order at any time. The brass-spring Locks and hinges, and any other hinges, the mortice locks and furniture, the Glue, and Painters brushes, or such part of each as you can most conveniently dispense with, may be added to my former list.

The Guinea-grass seeds which I sowed proved as defective as yours; but my nephew who arrived after I had the pleasure of your company at this place, brought me a small quantity from Bermuda, some of which I sowed and part has vegitated: if it prospers and is worth cultivating, I will supply you with a little of it to put you in stock, he speaks of it in very favourable terms, but is doubtful of the Climate.

Mrs. Washington joins in complimts. and best wishes for Mrs. Fitzhugh and yourself with Dr. Sir, &c.

P: S: I address this letter to you at Annapolis in consequence of the information of your intention to be there about the middle of this month.[60]

[60] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ISRAEL SHREVE

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 22d. of June came safely to hand.

I have no Lands in the Western Country which I incline, at this time, to make actual sale of. Between the two Kanhawa's on the banks of the Ohio, I hold (bounded by the river, and of rich bottom with good Mill Seats) about 10,000 acres of as valuable land as any in that region: and on the Gt. Kanhawa, from near the mouth upwards, I have about 30,000 acres more of equal quality with the first mentioned; all of which I have offered on Leases, for 21, 999, or 10 years, renewable forever, on encreasing rents; on certain conditions which were published in Claypoole's paper in March or April of last year, and may easily be resorted to.

As I have not disposed of these lands yet, I presume the terms are thought too high; but as I know the situation and convenience of them, and that the quality of the soil is inferior to none in all the Western Territory, I do not incline to make any change in my terms, unless I am, in a manner compelled to it by taxation, which (however inconvenient it may be to myself) I wish to see heavily laid on, that the officers and Soldiers, and other public creditors may receive their just dues. I am, etc.[61]

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, July 17, 1785.

Dr. Sir: By Mr. Gouverr. Morris I sent you the amount of the cost of plank, which you were so obliging as to send me from Baltimore.

[61] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The packet[62] enclosed with this, for Mr. Hilligas[63] contains necessary and valuable papers for Mr. Thos. Smith, in a suit I have been obliged to commence in Washington County, State of Pennsylva., against sundry persons who taking advantage of my absence and peculiar situation during the War, possessed themselves of a tract of Land I hold in the vicinity of Fort Pitt; for which I have a Patent, obtained in legal form, ever since the year 1774, and for which I am now compelled to bring ejectmts.

Mr. Smith requested these papers to be sent to him under cover to Mr. Hilligas as a certain mode of conveyance; but as much time has elapsed in obtaining them; as some of the papers point to evidence which may not readily be come at; as the Suit may come forward at the Septr. term, and as the channel of conveyance pointed out by him is very circuitous; I should be much obliged, if good opportunities frequently offer from Baltimore to Carlisle, by your stripping off the address to Mr. Hilligas, and forwarding the enclosure as directed to Mr. Smith. With much truth and sincerity, I am, etc.[64]

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, July 19, 1785.

Sir: The honor which the Society for promoting agriculture, lately established in the City of Philada., has done me by electing me an honorary member, is highly pleasing and flattering to me; the strongest assurances of which I pray you,

[62] On July 17 Washington wrote briefly to Michael Hillegas, a copy of which letter is in the "Letter Book," asking him to forward this packet of papers to Thomas Smith.

[63] Michael Hillegas.

[64] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

at the next meeting, to communicate with my respectful compliments to the Society. Accept at the same time Sir, my acknowledgment of the flattering expression, with which you have accompanied the certificate of my election.

No measure, in my opinion, will be more conducive to the public weal than the establishment of this Society, if the purposes of it are prosecuted with spirit. Much is it to be wished that each State would institute similar ones; and that these Societies when formed would correspond regularly and freely with each other. We are not only in our infancy of agriculture improvement, but in this State the farmers are pursuing an unprofitable course of Crops, to the utter destruction of their Lands.

I am obliged to the Society for its address to the public, and for the summary of a course of crops by Mr. Bordely:[65] the latter I had before received from the Author, who was so obliging as to send me several copies immediately after the publication thereof. I have the honor, etc.[66]

To GEORGE WEEDON

Mount Vernon, July 23, 1785.

Dr. Sir: It is some time since I received the enclosed Bill, under cover from the Drawer: among a multiplicity of other letters it got buried and forgot; until a line from Mr. de Marbois the other day, forwarding the third bill of same tenor and date, reminded me of it.

As I do not know who the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati of this State is, I take the liberty of committing the

[65] Beale(?) Boardly, of Wye, Md.
[66] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

Bill to your care, with a request that you would be so obliging as to ask him personally if he is near you, or by letter if he is at a distance, for a receipt for it, that I may transmit the same to Colo. De Corney, with an apology for my long silence. If I knew who the state Treasurer is, I would not give you any trouble in this business; but as I really do not, I hope it will be received as an excuse for having done it. I am, etc.[67]

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785.

My dr. Humphreys: Since my last to you, I have received your letter of the 15th. of January, and I believe that of the 11th. of November, and thank you for them.[68] It always gives me pleasure to hear from you; and I should think if *amusements* would spare you, business could not so much absorb your time as to prevent your writing more frequently, especially as there is a regular conveyance once a month by the Packet.

As the complexion of European politics seems now (from letters I have received from the Marqs. de la Fayette, Chevrs. Chartellux, De la Luzerne, &c.,) to have a tendency to Peace, I will say nothing of war, nor make any animadversions upon the contending powers; otherwise, I might possibly have said that the retreat from it seemed impossible after the explicit declaration of the parties: My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from off the Earth, and the sons and Daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements, than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind: rather than quarrel about

[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[68] Humphreys was then in Paris.

territory let the poor, the needy and oppressed of the Earth, and those who want Land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the *second*[69] *Promise,* and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment.

In a former letter, I informed you my Dr. Humphreys, that if I had *talents* for it, I have not *leisure* to turn my thoughts to commentaries: a consciousness of a defective education, and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking; what with company, letters and other matters, many of them quite extraneous, I have not been able to arrange my own private concerns so as to rescue them from that disorder'd state into which they have been thrown by the war, and to do which is become absolutely necessary for my support, whilst I remain on this stage of human action. The sentiments of your last letter on this subject gave me great pleasure; I should be pleased indeed to see you undertake this business: your abilities as a writer; your discernment respecting the principles which lead to the decision by arms; your personal knowledge of many facts as they occurred in the progress of the War; your disposition to justice, candour and impartiality, and your diligence in investigating truth, combining fit you, when joined with the vigor of life, for this task; and I should with great pleasure, not only give you the perusal of all my papers, but any oral information of circumstances, which cannot be obtained from the former, that my memory will furnish: and I can with great truth add that my house would not only be at your service during the period of your preparing this work, but (and without an unmeaning compliment I say it) I should be exceedingly happy if you would make it your home. You might have an apartment to yourself, in which you could command your own

[69] The words *"land of"* inadvertently omitted by the "Letter Book" recorder.

time; you wou'd be considered and treated as one of the family; and meet with that cordial reception and entertainment which are characteristic of the sincerest friendship.

To reverberate European news would be idle, and we have little of domestic kind worthy of attention: We have held treaties indeed, with the Indians; but they were so unseasonably delayed, that these people by our last accounts from the westward, are in a discontented mood, supposed by many to be instigated thereto by our late enemies, now, to be sure, *fast friends;* who from any thing I can learn, under the indefinite expression of the treaty hold, and seem resolved to retain possession of our western Posts. Congress have also, after a long and tedious deliberation, passed an ordinance for laying off the Western Territory into States, and for disposing of the land; but in a manner and on terms which few people (in the Southern States) conceive can be accomplished: Both sides are sure, and the event is appealed to, let time decide it. It is however to be regretted that local politics and self-interested views obtrude themselves into every measure of public utility: but to such characters be the consequences.

My attention is more immediately engaged in a project which I think big with great political, as well as commercial consequences to these States, especially the middle ones: it is, by removing the obstructions, and extending the inland navigation of our rivers, to bring the States on the Atlantic in close connexion with those forming to the westward, by a short and easy transportation: without this, I can easily conceive they will have different views, separate interests and other connexions. I may be singular in my ideas; but they are these, that to open a door to, and make easy the way for those Settlers to the westward (which ought to progress regularly and

compactly) before we make any stir about the navigation of the Mississippi, and before our settlements are far advanced towards that river, would be our true line of policy. It can, I think, be demonstrated, that the produce of the western Territory (if the navigations which are now in hand succeed, and of which I have no doubt) as low down the Ohio as the Great Kanhawa, I *believe* to the Falls, and between the parts above and the Lakes, may be brought either to the highest shipping port on this or James river, at a less expence, with more ease, (including the return) and in a much shorter time, than it can be carried to New Orleans if the Spaniards instead of restricting, were to throw open their ports and invite our trade. But if the commerce of that country should embrace this channel, and connexions be formed; experience has taught us (and there is a very recent proof with G: Britain) how next to impracticable it is to divert it; and if that should be the case, the Atlantic States (especially as those to the westward will in a great degree fill with foreigners) will be no more to the present union, except to excite perhaps very justly our fears, than the Country of California which is still more to the westward, and belonging to another power.

Mrs. Washington presents her compliments to you, and with every wish for your happiness, I am etc.[70]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785.

My Dear Marquis: I have to acknowledge and thank you for your several favors of the 9th. of February, 19th. of March and 16th. of April, with their enclosures; all of which (the last only

[70] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

yesterday) have been received since I had the honor to address you in February.

I stand before you as a Culprit: but to *repent* and *be forgiven* are the precepts of Heaven: I do the former, do you practice the latter, and it will be participation of a divine attribute. Yet I am not barren of excuses for this seeming inattention; frequent absences from home, a round of company when at it, and the pressure of many matters, might be urged as apologies for my long silence; but I disclaim all of them, and trust to the forbearance of friendship and your wonted indulgence: indeed so few things occur, in the line on which I now move, worthy of attention, that this also might be added to the catalogue of my excuses; especially when I further add, that one of my letters, if it is to be estimated according to its length, would make three of yours.

I now congratulate you, and my heart does it more effectually than my pen, on your safe arrival at Paris, from your voyage to this Country, and on the happy meeting with Madame la Fayette and your family in good health. May the blessing of this long continue to them, and may every day add increase of happiness to yourself.

As the clouds which overspread your hemisphere are dispersing, and peace with all its concomitants is dawning upon your Land, I will banish the sound of War from my letter: I wish to see the sons and daughters of the world in Peace and busily employed in the more agreeable amusement of fulfilling the first and great commandment, *Increase and Multiply:* as an encouragement to which we have opened the fertile plains of the Ohio to the poor, the needy and the oppressed of the Earth; any one therefore who is heavy laden, or who wants land to cultivate, may repair thither and abound, as in the Land of promise, with milk and honey: the ways are preparing,

and the roads will be made easy, thro' the channels of Potomac and James river.

Speaking of these navigations, I have the pleasure to inform you that the subscriptions, (especially for the first) at the surrender of the books, agreeably to the act which I enclosed you in my last, exceeded my most sanguine expectation: for the latter, that is James river, no comparison of them has yet been made.

Of the £50,000 Sterlg. required for the Potomac navigation, upwards of £40,000, was subscribed before the middle of May, and encreasing fast. A President and four Directors, consisting of your hble. Servant, Govrs. Johnson and Lee of Maryland, and Colo. Fitzgerald and Gilpin of this State, were chosen to conduct the undertaking. The first dividend of the money was paid in on the 15th. of this month; and the work is to be begun the first of next, in those parts which require least skill; leaving the more difficult 'till an Engineer of abilities and practical knowledge can be obtained; which reminds me of the question which I propounded to you in my last, on this subject, and on which I should be glad to learn your sentiments. This prospect, if it succeeds and of which I have no doubt, will bring the Atlantic States and the Western Territory into close connexion, and be productive of very extensive commercial and political consequences; the last of which gave the spur to my exertions, as I could foresee many, and great mischiefs which would naturally result from a separation, and that a separation would inevitably take place, if the obstructions between the two countries remained, and the navigation of the Mississippi should be made free.

Great Britain, in her commercial policy is acting the same unwise part, with respect to herself, which seems to have influenced all her Councils; and thereby is defeating her own ends:

the restriction of our trade, and her heavy imposts on the staple commodities of this Country, will I conceive, immediately produce powers in Congress to regulate the Trade of the Union; which, more than probably would not have been obtained without in half a century. The mercantile interests of the *whole* Union are endeavouring to effect this, and will no doubt succeed; they see the necessity of a controuling power, and the futility, indeed the absurdity, of each State's enacting Laws for this purpose independent of one another. This will be the case also, after a while, in all matters of common concern. It is to be regretted, I confess, that Democratical States must always *feel* before they can *see:* it is this that makes their Governments slow, but the people will be right at last.

Congress after long deliberation, have at length agreed upon a mode for disposing of the Lands of the United States in the Western territory: it may be a good one, but it does not comport with my ideas. The ordinance is long, and I have none of them by me, or I would send one for your perusal. They seem in this instance, as in almost every other, to be surrendering the little power they have, to the States individually which gave it to them. Many think the price which they have fixed upon the Lands too high; and all to the Southward I believe, that disposing of them in Townships, and by square miles alternately, they will be a great let to the sale: but experience, to which there is an appeal, must decide.

Soon after I had written to you in Feby., Mr. Jefferson, and after him Mr. Carmichael informed me that in consequence of an application from Mr. Harrison[71] for permission to export a Jack for me from Spain, his Catholic Majesty had ordered *two* of the first race in his Kingdom (lest an accident might happen to *one*) to be purchased and presented to me as a mark of his

[71] Richard Harrison. He was a merchant of Cadiz, Spain.

esteem. Such an instance of condescension and attention from a crowned head is very flattering, and lays me under great obligation to the King; but neither of them is yet arrived: these I presume are the two mentioned in your favor of the 16th. of April; one as having been shipped from Cadiz, the other as expected from the Isle of Malta,[72] which you would forward. As they have been purchased since December last, I began to be apprehensive of accidents; which I wish may not be the case with respect to the one from Cadiz, if he was actually shipped at the time of your account: should the other pass thro' your hands you cannot oblige me more, than by requiring the greatest care, and most particular attention to be paid to him. I have long endeavoured to procure one of a good size and breed, but had little expectation of receiving two as a royal gift.

I am much obliged to you my dear Marquis, for your attention to the hounds, and not less sorry that you should have met the smallest difficulty, or experienced the least trouble in obtaining them: I was no way anxious about these, consequently should have felt no regret, or sustained no loss if you had not succeeded in your application. I have commissioned three or four persons (among whom Colo. Marshall[73] is one,) to procure for me in Kentucke, for the use of the Kings Garden's at Versailles or elsewhere, the seeds mentioned in the list you sent me from New York, and such others as are curious, and will forward them as soon as they come to my hands; which cannot be 'till after the growing Crop has given its seeds.

My best wishes will accompany you to Potsdam, and into the Austrian Dominions whenever you set out upon that tour. As an unobserved spectator, I should like to take a peep at the

[72] The jack from Malta was obtained by Lafayette and was separate and distinct from the Spanish jacks.

[73] Thomas(?) Marshall.

troops of those Monarch's at their manœuverings, upon a grand field day; but as it is among the unattainable things, my philosophy shall supply the place of curiosity, and set my mind at ease.

In your favor of the 19th. of March you speak of letters which were sent by a Mr. Williams; but none such have come to hand. The present for the little folks did not arrive by Mr. Ridouts Ship as you expected; to what cause owing I know not. Mrs. Washington has but indifferent health; and the late loss of her mother, and only brother Mr. Barthw. Dandridge (one of the Judges of our Supreme Court) has rather added to her indisposition. My mother and friends enjoy good health. George has returned after his peregrination thro' the West Indies, to Bermuda, the Bahama Islands, and Charlestown; at the last place he spent the winter. He is in better health than when he set out, but not quite recovered: He is now on a journey to the Sweet Springs, to procure a stock sufficient to fit him for a matrimonial voyage in the Frigate F. Bassett, on board which he means to embark at his return in October: how far his case is desperate, I leave you to judge, if it is so, the remedy however pleasing at first, will certainly be violent.

The latter end of April I had the pleasure to receive in good order, by a Ship from London, the picture of yourself, Madame la Fayette and the children, which I consider as an invaluable present, and shall give it the best place in my House. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments, and in every good wish for Madame de la Fayette, yourself and family, all the others who have come under your kind notice present their compliments to you. For myself, I can only repeat the sincere attachment, and unbounded affection of My Dr. Marqs., &c.[74]

[74] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, July 27, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 5th. came duly to hand, and should have been acknowledged sooner, if it had been in my power, conveniently. I thank you for your attention to the Certificates which I committed to your care; and will obtain an order from Gilbert Simpson, by which the Interest may be received. This money is all I am likely to get for a Mill which he ran me to the Expence of £1200 hard money to build, near Yohiogany, now tumbling down, and for which I can not get a farthing, rent. If Mr. Stelle[75] has the cover, in which the Certificates were wrapped, I should be glad to have it returned to me, or, if there is any thing within, useful to him, a Copy of the memn. on the back of it. It is the only minutes I took of the different Interests in the Certificates, it enclosed.

Since your last conference with Messrs. Dunlap & Claypool, their Advertiser has come to hand regularly. I am content therefore to have it continued.

As you think my small Commissions will not give you more trouble than they are worth, I shall, when I find occasion, continue them with pleasure.

We expect to begin our operations on the Potomack Navigation about the 6th of next Month, under the Management of a Mr James Rumsey. If the Miners therefore, who have been accustomed to the blowing of Rocks under Water, are desirous of employment in this way, and are not extravagant in their demands, I am persuaded he would hire them, were they to apply to him, either at the Seneca falls, or the Falls of Shannondoah; neither of which are far from Frederick Town in

[75] Benjamin Stelle.

Maryland, or, if they think the distance too great to come on an uncertainty if through you, they will communicate to me their lowest terms, I will see that an answer to them is obtained. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to, and best wishes for you, Mrs. Biddle and the family and I am, etc.[76]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, July 28, 1785.

Sir: A few days ago by a Mr. Hickman,[77] who either is, or wants to be a tenant of mine in Frederick County. I sent you a dozen blank Leases. The tract on which he says he is fixed, is part of two Lots which I purchased at the sale of Colo. George Mercer's Estate, in the year 1774; a plat of which I send you, that the whole may be arranged into four tenements, as conveniently disposed as water &c. will admit.

In September last, whilst I was at my brothers in Berkeley, many persons applied for this Land; but from causes which then existed I came to no positive agreement with any; referring them to Mr. Snickers,[78] who was so kind as to promise that he would fix matters for me (as I was in a hurry and could not go upon the Land myself) on the terms which, if I recollect right, I gave him in a letter. Some time after, two men of the names of Winzer[79] and Beaven, with the letter enclosed from Mr. Snickers, came here, and were told that I would comply with whatever agreement was made with them by him. Among other things they said Mr. Snickers had promised them Leases for fourteen years; this I observed could not, in my opinion, be the case, because I had expressly named ten years (the

[76] This text is from that printed in a sales catalogue in 1924.
[77] Joseph Hickman.
[78] Edward Snickers.
[79] Joseph Winsor or Windsor.

term for which Mr. Burwell let his Lands adjoining), but notwithstanding if the case was so, and Mr. Snickers would declare it, the Leases should be filled up accordingly: this I repeat, and as far as the matter respects Winzer, for it seems Beaven has changed his mind, the other conditions endorsed on the back of Mr. Snickers's letter to me, are to be granted him; he paying all the taxes wch. may be laid on the Land he holds.

However, as filling up one Lease may be a guide with respect to the others, I enclose one in the name of Winzer, with the blank, as completely filled as I can do it under my uncertainty with respect to the term of years for which he is to have it, and which is to be determined by Mr. Snickers; and for want of the quantity of acres in, and a description of the Lot which he is to have.

There are already three Tenants on this tract, to whom you may fill up Leases on the same terms which I have done for Winzer; and whenever they will bring evidences to prove them, I will sign them. As Beaven has declined taking the Lot which he agreed for first with Mr. Snickers and afterwards with me, you may let it to any good tenant who offers, upon the terms on which the others are held. The three new engaged will have rents to pay thereon the first of next January. It will be necessary to take an Assignment of Mr. Whitings Lease, before one can be made to Mr. Airess;[80] or some instrument of writing by which it will be cancelled, in order to render the new one valid; and I hope payment of the money due on the replevy Bonds of the former will not be delayed longer than the time mentioned in your last letter, viz, September.

Having got a Gentleman to assist me in my business; I hope shortly to have my Accots. so arranged as to be able to send you

[80] Ariss.

a rental of what is due to be in London, Fauquier and Berkeley Counties. I have a Lot in the town and common of Winchester of which, when you have occasion to go thither, I beg you to enquire into the state and condition, and give me information of what can be made of them: the one in the Town, I believe a Doctr. McKay has something to do with.

I would be obliged to you for enquiring of Mr. Wormley's manager, if he has any good red clover seed for sale, what quantity, and the price thereof, and let me know the result by the first conveyance to Alexandria. I am, etc.[81]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, July 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: Altho' it is not my intention to derive any pecuniary advantage from the generous vote of the Assembly of this State, consequent of its gratuitous gift of fifty shares in each of the navigations of the rivers Potomac and James; yet, as I consider these undertakings as of vast political and commercial importance to the States on the Atlantic, especially to those nearest the centre of the Union, and adjoining the Western Territory, I can let no act of mine impede the progress of the work: I have therefore come to the determination to hold the shares which the Treasurer was directed to subscribe on my account, in trust for the use and benefit of the public; unless I shall be able to discover, before the meeting of the Assembly, that it would be agreeable to it to have the product of the Sales arising from these shares, applied as a fund on which to establish two Charity schools, one on each river, for the Education and support of the Children of the poor and indigent of this

[81] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Country who cannot afford to give it; particularly the children of those men of this description, who have fallen in defence of the rights and liberties of it. If the plans succeed, of which I have no doubt, I am sure it will be a very productive and encreasing fund, and the monies thus applied will be a beneficial institun.

I am aware that my non-acceptance of these shares will have various motives ascribed to it, among which an ostentatious display of disinterestedness, perhaps the charge of disrespect or slight of the favors of my Country, may lead the van: but under a consciousness that my conduct herein is not influenced by considerations of this nature, and that I shall act more agreeably to my own feelings and more consistent with my early declarations, by declining to accept them; I shall not only hope for indulgence, but a favorable interpretation of my conduct: my friends, I persuade myself, will acquit me, the World I hope will judge charitably.

Perceiving by the advertisement of Messrs. Cabell, Buchanan and Southa; that half the sum required by the Act, for opening and extending the navigation of James river, is subscribed; and the 20th. of next month appointed for the subscribers to meet at Richmond, I take the liberty of giving you a power to act for me on that occasion.[82] I would (having the accomplishment of these navigations much at heart) have attended in person; but the President and Directors of the Potomac Company by their own appointment, are to commence the survey of this river in the early part of next month; for which purpose I shall leave home tomorrow. Besides which, if the

[82] Washington was elected president of the James River Navigation Co., but declined to serve. A copy of his power to Randolph to represent him at the James River meeting follows this letter in the "Letter Book."

Ejectments which I have been obliged to bring for my Land in Pennsylva. are to be tried at the September Term, as Mr. Smith, my Lawyer, conceived they would, and is to inform me, I shall find it necessary I fear, to attend the trial; an intermediate journey therefore, in addition, to Richmond would be impracticable for me to accomplish. I am, etc.

*To NOAH WEBSTER

Mount Vernon, July 30, 1785.

Sir: I received your letter of the 19th. Instt.[83] Being convinced from the respectable characters whose names are prefixed to your Grammatical Institute, as well as from the cursory examination I have had it in my power to bestow on the Books, of the judicious execution, and usefulness of the Work; it would give me pleasure if I could be instrumental, in any degree, towards the introduction of it to public notice. But I am a little at a loss, from the purport of your letter, to decide, whether it is your desire that my name should appear amongst those who have already subscribed to the utility of the Work; or, by introducing its Author to some of the first characters in the Southern States (under the favourable impression he has made upon me) to act more remotely. If the first is meant, I wish to decline it; because I have not leizure to examine the Institute with that attention which ought, always, to precede a certificate; and because I do not think myself a competent Judge, if I had. But if the other is your object, I shall have great pleasure in giving you Letters of recommendation to some of the first Gentlemen of my Acquaintance in Charleston, or elsewhere, being Sir Yr. etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

[83] Webster's letter, dated July 18, 1785, from Baltimore, is in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM BAILEY

Georgetown,[84] August 2, 1785.

Sir: By a letter which I lately received from Mr. Stoddert, I am informed that you had agreed to supply my nephews George and Lawrence Washington with such articles from your Store as their necessities might require. For which I thank you, and I have no doubt of your doing it upon good terms: the amount of which I hope will always be ready when called for. But I have to beg Sir, that they may not be indulged in any extravagance, or with any thing improper; school boys of their size, and growing, should have decent, but not expensive things; their inclinations too often prompt them to the latter, which grows upon them in proportion as they are indulged: nor should they have pocket money given them, unless the necessity is apparent and the application approved of.

Any advance for Dancing, French &ca., which may be directed by their Tutor Mr. Balch, will be chearfully repaid. I am, etc.[85]

To JOHN SEDGWICK

Falls of Shannondoah, August 8, 1785.

Sir: In answer to your letter of this date, I think I may venture to assure you that no writ has issued by order, or under my

[84] According to his "Diary," Washington left Mount Vernon early in the morning of August 1 "and, after escorting Fanny Bassett to Alexandria, I proceeded to Doctr. Stuart's where I breakfasted; from thence to George Town to the Annual Meeting of the Potowmack Company appointed to be held at that place. . . . Dined at Shuter's Tavern and lodged at Mr. Oneal's." Shuter's was John Suter's Tavern, and Bernard O'Neale (O'Neill, Oneal) was one of the stockholders of the Potomac Company.

On August 2 Washington left Georgetown about 10 o'clock a. m., dined at Thomas Beall's Mill, about 14 miles from Georgetown, and afterwards proceeded to Mr. Goldsborough's, at the head of Seneca Falls. From thence he went, on August 5, to Harper's Ferry by way of Frederick, Md. On August 6 he was at Harper's Ferry, and on August 10 he returned to Mount Vernon at about 9 o'clock in the evening.

[85] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

authority, against the Exors and Security of your deceased Father, for the amount of a Bond passed by him to Colo. Tayloe[86] and myself, as Attornies for Colo. George Mercer and his Mortgagees, in England.

The high Court of Chancery of this Commonwealth decreed (I do not at this moment recollect when) that the Bonds, and other papers which were in my possession relative to this business (as my situation did not admit of my acting, and as I had refused to do so) should be given up to John Mercer Esqr., which was accordingly done.

If under this Decree such of the Bonds as were made payable to the Attornies aforesaid have been put in Suit in my name as the surviving Attorney; I *presume* it is a matter of course: but how a Bond which you say has been discharged, and not among the papers which were surrendered, should be under this predicament, I am not able to inform you. I am, etc.[87]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

[Mount Vernon] August 13, 1785.

Dear Sir: At the time your letter from the Rocks was delivered to me, I had neither pen, ink, paper, or a table to write on at command; consequently could only verbally acknowledge the receipt of it, which I did by Mr. Wormley:[88] since my return home I have met your other favor of the 29th. ulto.

The great object, for the accomplishment of which I wish to see the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James improved and extended, is to connect the Western Territory with the Atlantic States; all others, with me, are secondary: tho' I am clearly of opinion that it will greatly increase our

[86] John Tayloe.
[87] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[88] Ralph Wormley.

commerce, and be an immense saving, in the article of transportation, and draft cattle, to the Planters and Farmers who are in a situation to have the produce of their labor water borne.

These being my sentiments, I wish to see the undertaking progress *equally* in both rivers; and but for my local situation, and numerous avocations, my attention to each should be alike: what little I do for the advancement of the enterprize in this river, is done, as it were en passant; and because I think the difficulties greater than in the other, and not because I give it the preference, for both in my opinion have their advantages, without much, if any interference with each other. The advantages arising from my patronage of either, is probably more ideal than real; but such as they are, I wish them to be thought equally distributed: my contribution to the works shall be the same. I have already subscribed five shares to the Potomac navigation; and enclosed I give you a power to put my name down for five shares, to that of James river.

With respect to acting as President to the Board of Directors for that Company, it is a delicate subject for me to speak to: every person who knows how much my time (by company and other matters) is occupied, must also know that it would be impossible for me to discharge the duties of the office, as they should be; even here, where the business for the most part is, and will continue to be done at Alexandria, or George-town (eight miles further from me), it was so evident to me that I could not perform the duties of President with that diligence and propriety which I thought necessary, that I wish to decline it, but could not get excused: How much more would this be the case with James river, where the journey to it alone would be a work of time and labour: and besides, let it not be forgotten my Dr. Sir, that tho' *some* of the Subscribers may wish to see me at the head of the Board of Directors; yet there may be

others who would feel disappointed and hurt if they are over looked, and this might have an influence on their connexions. I mention these things to you with the candour and frankness of a friend, and under the rose; after which your own judgment and those of your friends, must dictate for the best. I am persuaded all of us have the same object in view, and what ever shall be deemed, by the concurrent voice of the subscribers, the best means to effect it, shall meet my hearty approbation.

My last letter was written to you in such haste, that I apprehend I was not sufficiently explicit to be understood. It was not my intention to apply for a copy of the Governor's instructions releasing him from the restriction of the Kings Proclamation; but for the order of Council consequent thereof, directing or permitting Warrants to issue on military rights, agreeably thereto: because if the date of this order had been found to be antecedent to the occupancy of my adversaries, it would remove them from their grand Fort, for on *possession,* before I took any *legal* steps, I know they mean to place their *sole* defence.

The Patent, and thousands of Warrants are evidences that the restrictions respecting military settlers was taken off; but they do not ascertain *the time*. My Patent, if I recollect right, was dated in July, 1774; but the occupants, according to their own accounts, possessed the Land in the Octobr. preceding; if therefore I could have obtained a Certificate of the loss of the Council Books; and any circumstance could have been recollected by which it should appear (as unquestionably the fact is) that the recognition of military rights was previous to October 1773, and so intimated in the Certificate aforesaid; it would have been useful: *Without* this indeed, the matter is so clear, in my judgment, as not to admit of dispute before an *impartial* Jury; but an *impartial* Jury I do not expect, and much

less since I have heard that the high Sheriff of the County (lately chosen) is of the fraternity of my competitors, and interested in the decision, so far at least as similar circumstances, and the suffrages of these people in his election, can bias him. Indeed I have lately been told that the decision of this case will be interesting to numbers whose rights are disputed on similar grounds. I am, &c.[89]

To THE SHERIFF OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

Mount Vernon, August 15, 1785.

Sir: The enclosed came under cover to me: I send it to you, and beg it may be executed and returned in time.

Captn. Jacobs married the widow of Captn. Michael Cresap; which, if it was a fact unknown to you before, is given as a clue by which you may come at the parties, and serve the summons. I am, etc.[89]

To BENJAMIN OGLE

Mount Vernon, August 17, 1785.

Sir: The enclosed from Mr. Dulaney did not come to my hands (being from home) until Sunday last. I thank you for your obliging offer of two or three Fawns; but presuming the season is now too far advanced either to catch or gentle them, I will not send before I hear further from you on this subject.

If it is too late to obtain them this year, I would thank you for the like number next Spring; by which time I shall have a proper inclosure for them, and for the Deer of this Country, of which I am also endeavouring to procure a stock to breed from.

With compliments to Mrs. Ogle, I have the honor, etc.[89]

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, August 17, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 8th. came safely by last Post. I will, the first time I go to Alexandria, get an order from Colo. Hooe, Mr. Hartshorne, or some other who has dealings in Philadelphia (for I have none, and know of no direct and safe opportunity of sending money) to the amount of the Sum which you have lately paid on my Acct. to Mr. Boudinot.

The inclosed is to Edward (I do not know his Sirname)[90] who formerly lived with Mr. R. Morris, but now, I am informed, keeps the City Tavern, to see if he can be instrumental in procuring me a House keeper. I beg you to be so obliging as to direct, deliver, and consult him on the contents of the letter, which is left open for your perusal, and return me an answr. as soon as possible.

The man who at present lives with me in the capacity of a Housekeeper (and is a very good one) is bound for the port of Matrimony, and will, after 4 or 5 Weeks which he has agreed to stay, leave me in a very disagreeable Situation if I cannot get supplied in the meanwhile. I give him £25 this Curry. pr. Ann. and a suit of Clothes which cannt. be less than Seven pounds more, these, with the difference of Exchange, will be equal to abt. £40 pensa. Cury. This Sum I am willing to give to Man, or Woman (the former I would prefer) of good character, and really knowing and competent to my purposes.

I have seen an Advertisement in some of the Philadelphia Papers of an Office for this kind of business, but however good it may be as a *channel* for *enquiry* I would not depend upon it, without other testimonials respecting the character and abilities of an applicant for the final adoption. Mrs. Washington

[90] Edward Moyston.

joins me in best wishes for yourself, and Mrs. Biddle and family. I am etc.

PS. Since writing the foregoing, I have met with, and now inclose you, a bank note for 30 dollars; which please to receive, and carry to my credit. [H.S.P.]

*To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, August 17, 1785.

Dear Sir: The Baltimore Advertiser of the 12th. Instt. announces the arrival of a Ship at that Port, immediately from China; and by an advertisement in the same Paper, I perceive that the Cargo is to be sold at public Vendue, on the first of Octr. next.

At what prices the enumerated articles will sell, or the terms proposed, can only be known from the experiment; but if the quantity at Market is great, and they should sell as goods have Sold at Vendue, bargains may be expected. I therefore take the liberty of requesting the favor of you, in that case, to purchase the several things contained in the inclosed list.[91]

You will readily perceive, My dear Sir, my purchasing, or not, depends entirely upon the prices. If *great bargains* are to be had, I would supply myself agreeably to the list. If the

[91] This list, in Washington's writing, was inclosed in his letter to Tilghman. It called for the purchase of the following articles. Those "marked in the Margin of the Invoice" were so marked with a star:

A Sett of the best Nankin Table China
Ditto, best Evening China Cups and Saucers
*A set of *large* blue and White China Dishes, say half a dozn., more or less
*1 Dozn. *small* bowls, blue and white.
*6 Wash hand Guglets and Basons
6 large Mugs, or 3 Mugs and 3 Jugs.

} With the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati, if to be had.

A Quartr. Chest, *best* Hyson Tea. A Leagure of Battavia Arrack if a Leagure is not large. About 13 yds. of good bla: Paduasoy. *A ps. of fine Muslin, plain. *1 ps. of Silk Handkerchiefs. 12 ps. of the best Nankeens. 18 ps. of the second quality, or coursest kind, for Servants.

prices do not fall *below* a cheap *retail* Sale, I would decline them altogether, or take such articles only (if cheaper than common) as are marked in the Margin of the Invoice.

Before October, if none of these Goods are previously sold, and if they are the matter will be ascertained thereby, you will be able to form a judgment of the prices they will command at Vendue. Upon information of which, I will deposit money in your hands to comply with the terms of the Sale.

Since I began this letter, I have been informed that good India Nankeens are selling at Dumfries (not far from me) at 7/6 a ps. this Curry. But if my memory has not failed me, I used to import them before the War for about 5/ Sterlg. If so, though 50 pr Ct. is a small advance upon India Goods, through a British Channel, (with the duties and accumulated charges thereon) yet, quære would not 7/6 be a high price for Nankeens brought immediately from India, exempted from *such* duties and Charges?

If this is a conjecture founded in fairness, it will give my ideas of the prices of other Articles from that Country, and be a government for your conduct therein, at, or before the day appointed for the public Vendue, with the highest esteem and regard I am etc. [H.S.P.]

To THOMAS RIDOUT

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: By the return of the Brig I was favored with your letter of the 1st. of May, with several cases of wine, and a box of sundries which came to hand in good order, and I presume are of good quality; as the wine which you sent to others is, I am informed, much esteemed, my own I have not tasted. I am obliged to you for sending these things, the amount shall be paid to Colo. Geo: Fitzgerald in a short time.

For your care of the enclosed letters, I will thank you: the one under a blank cover I shall be obliged to you for giving the proper address of the Father of Baron de Montesquieu; from whom I received a letter,[92] but under such a signature as leaves me at a loss how to direct my answer to him. If my letter to the Baron is like to subserve the purpose for which it was intended, it will give me pleasure.

The small packages which the Marqs. de la Fayette intended to send by your Brig, must, I presume, have miscarried between Paris and Bourdeau, as his letters to me speak positively as to their being sent from the former place. I am, etc.[93]

To JEAN BAPTISTE, BARON DE SECONDAT

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: By a brig belonging to Mr. Ridout of Bourdeaux, I had the honor to receive your letter of the 2d. of May and the Wine which accompanied it; which you were so obliging as to send me at the request of your worthy son, it came in very good order. For this instance of his kind remembrance and your polite attention, I pray you to accept my warmest acknowledgments: my thanks are due also in a particular manner to you, Sir, for the walnuts you sent me, which are very fine; and I shall endeavour to propagate them in the manner directed by you.

I pray you to forward, when you shall find a convenient opportunity, the enclosed letter for the Baron de Montesquieu, with assurances of my sincere regard and friendship for him, I have the honor, etc.[93]

[92] This letter, dated May 2, 1785, is in the *Washington Papers*, and is signed "Secondat."

[93] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To BARON DE MONTESQUIEU[94]

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1785.

Sir: The receiving a letter from you is pleasing, the expression of it is flattering; and for the valuable testimony of your recollection of me, I pray you to accept my warmest acknowledgments.

The bare intimation of your once more making a visit to the Land, to the liberties of which your sword has contributed, is flattering, and should you realize it, I hope you will consider my seat as your head quarters whilst you remain in the United States. I can assure you, you would no where meet with a more cordial reception, or give more pleasure, as I have ever had a high esteem and regard for you: but whether in this town, or any other to which you may be called by duty or inclination, my warmest wishes shall always attend you, being Dr. Sir Yrs., etc.[95]

To —— VAN DRILLON

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Sir: Thro' the hands of Mr. Van Berkel, I had the honor to receive your letter of the first of March.

It rests with a General Meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati to admit foreigners as honorary members; tho' it has been done by many of the State Societies, where the subject proposed was a resident. The general Meeting is triennial, and will not assemble again before May 1787; but if my memory serves me, there were some particular reasons given at the last, which induced a resolution to suspend the further appointment of

[94] Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, Marquis de La Brède, grandson of the author of "L'Esprit des Lois."

[95] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

honorary members, as well citizens as foreigners: but if I should be mistaken in this, I shall have great pleasure in proposing you as a member of that body, which have associated for the purpose, amongst others, of commemorating the great events to which, under providence, they owe the deliverance of their country from systematic tyranny.

With a grateful sense of the flattering expression of your letter, and with much esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.[96]

To JAMES McHENRY

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your letter of the first inst: came to this place whilst I was absent on a tour up the river, or an earlier acknowledgment of it shou'd have been sent to you: the inclosure shall, either by this or the next post, be sent to Dr. Gordon for his information, and that justice may be done to a character so deserving American gratitude and the pen of an historian, as the Marqs. de la Fayette.

I am very glad to hear that Congress are relieved from the embarrassment which originated with Longchamp:[97] had the demand of him been persisted in, it might have involved very serious consequences; it is better for the Court of France to be a little vexed, than for it to have perservered in the demand of him.

As I have ever been a friend to adequate powers of Congress, without which it is evident to me we never shall establish a

[96] On August 22 Washington also wrote briefly to Van Berckel, asking him to forward this letter, a copy of which is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[97] Chevalier Longchamp. He had assaulted Barbé Marbois in a street in Philadelphia and, although arrested, tried, found guilty, imprisoned, and fined by the Pennsylvania courts, France demanded that he, as a French subject, should be surrendered to her and sent to Paris for trial. (See the *Journals of the Continental Congress* for 1784 and 1785.

national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe, I am sorry I cannot agree with you in sentiment not to enlarge them for the regulating of commerce. I have neither time nor abilities to enter into a full discussion of this subject, but it should seem to me that your arguments against it; principally, that some States may be more benefited than others by a commercial regulation, apply to every matter of general utility; for can there be a case enumerated in which this argument has not its force in a greater or less degree? We are either a united people under one head, and for federal purposes; or we are thirteen independant sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other: if the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the Constitution[98] points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority: let the southern States always be represented; let them act more in union; let them declare freely and boldly what is for the interest of, and what is prejudicial to their constituents; and there will, there *must* be an accommodating spirit; in the establishment of a navigation act, this in a particular manner ought, and will doubtless be attended to. If the assent of nine (or as some propose, of eleven) States is necessary to give validity to a Commercial system; it insures this measure, or it cannot be obtained: Wherein then lies the danger? But if your fears are in danger of being realized, cannot certain provisos in the ordinance guard against the evil? I see no difficulty in this, if the southern Delegates would give their attendance in Congress, and follow the example, if it should be set them, of hanging together to counteract combinations. I confess to you candidly, that I can foresee no evil greater than disunion than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say *unreasonable,* because I would

[98] The Articles of Confederation.

have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils to the prevention of real ones.

As you have asked the question, I answer, I do not know that we can enter upon a war of Imposts with Gt: Britain, or any other foreign power; but we are certain that this war has been waged agst. us by the former, *professedly* upon a belief that we never could unite in opposition to it; and I *believe* there is no way of putting an end to, or at least of stopping the encrease of it, but to convince them of the contrary. Our trade in all points of view, is as essential to G: B: as hers is to us; and she will exchange it upon reciprocal and liberal terms, if better cannot be had. It can hardly be supposed, I think, that the carrying business will devolve wholly on the States you have named, or remain long with them if it should; for either G: B: will depart from her present contracted system; or the policy of the southern States in framing the Act of navigation, or by Laws passed by themselves individually, will devise ways and means to encourage seaman for the transportation of the product of their respective Countries, or for the encouragement of .[99] But admitting the contrary; if the Union is considered as permanent, (and on this I presume all superstructures are built) had we not better encourage seamen among ourselves, with less imports, than divide it with foreigners, and by increasing the amount of them, ruin our Merchants and greatly injuring the mass of our Citizens?

To sum up the whole, I foresee, or think I do it, the many advantages which will arise from giving powers of this kind to Congress (if a sufficient number of States are required to

[99] Blank in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

exercise them) without any evil, save that which may proceed from inattention, or want of wisdom in the formation of the act; whilst without them we stand in a ridiculous point of view in the eyes of the nations of the world with whom we are attempting to enter into Commercial treaties, without means of carrying them into effect; who must see and feel that the Union, or the States individually are sovereigns as best suits their purposes; in a word, that we are one nation today, and thirteen to-morrow, who will treat with us on such terms? But perhaps I have gone too far, and therefore will only add that Mrs. Washington offers her compliments and best wishes for you and that with great esteem etc.[1]

To THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir: In my absence with the Directors of the Potomac navigation, to examine the river and fix a plan of operations, your favor begun on the 23d. and ended the 31st. of July came to this place.[2] I am sorry to hear of your late indisposition, but congratulate you on your recovery; hoping the reestablishment of your health may be of long continuance.

The Packet which you were so obliging as to send for me, came safe; and I thank you for your care of it, but for want of knowledge of the language, I can form no opinion of my own of the Dramatic performance of Monsr. Serviteur la Barbier.[3]

[1] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[2] Richard Henry Lee's letter of July 23, to which this letter is the reply, says: "Is it possible that a plan can be formed for issuing a large sum of paper money by the next Assembly? I do verily believe that the greatest foes we have in the world could not devise a more effectual plan for ruining Virginia. I should suppose, that every friend to his country, every honest and sober man would join heartily to reprobate so nefarious a plan of speculation." Lee's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

[3] Le Barbier, jr. His letter of March 4 is in the *Washington Papers*, but his drama concerning Captain Asgill is not now found therein. Barbier had also sent the drama to the President of Congress.

The current of my information from France is, that the dispute between the Emperor and Holland will be accommodated without bloodshed; but after the explicit declarations which have been made on both sides, I do not see how either (especially the first) can recede from their claims. To save appearances, and to let the contending parties down *handsomely,* say some of my letters, is now the greatest difficulty; but all agree that a spark may set the whole in flames, indeed, Bavaria it is expected will do this.

It is to be hoped that our Minister at the Court of London will bring that Government to an explanation respecting the Western Posts, which it still retains on the American side the line, contrary to the spirit, if not the letter of the Treaty. My opinion from the first, and so I declared it, was that these posts would be detained from us, as long as they could be held under any pretence whatsoever. I have not changed it, tho' I wish for cause to do so, as it may become a serious matter. However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it: that the navigation of the Mississippi, *at this time* ought to be no object with us: on the contrary untill we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic States and the Western Territory, the obstruction had better remain. There is nothing which binds one Country or one State to another but interest; without this cement the Western Inhabitants (who more than probably will be composed in a great degree of Foreigners) can have no predilection for us; and a Commercial connexion is the only tie we can have upon them. It is clear to me that the trade of the Lakes, and of the river Ohio as low as the Great Kanhawa if not to the Falls, may be brought to the Atlantic ports easier and cheaper, taking the *whole* voyage together, than it can be carried to New Orleans: but once open the door to the latter, before the obstructions are

removed from the former, let commercial connexions, which lead to others, be formed, and the habit of that trade well established, and it will be found to be no easy matter to divert it: and vice versa. When the settlements are stronger and more extended to the westward; the navigation of the Mississippi will be an object of importance; and we shall then be able (reserving our claim) to speak a more efficacious language than policy, I think dictate at present.

I never have, and I hope never shall, hear any serious mention of a paper emission in this State; yet such a thing may be in agitation. Ignorance and design are productive of much mischief: the first are the tool of the latter, and are often set to work suddenly and unexpectedly. Those with whom I have conversed on the subject in this part of the State, reprobate the idea exceedingly.

We have lately had the pleasure of Miss Lee's and Miss Hannah's company at this place; they were both well five days ago. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her compliments; and with sentiments of great respect, esteem, and regard, I am, &c.

P. S. Your name, I well remember, stands among those of the subscribers, for a share in the Potomac navigation.[4]

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir: During my tour up the Potomac River, with the Directors to examine and to form a plan for opening and extending the navigation of it, agreeably to the acts of the Virginia and Maryland Assemblies, your favor of the 25th. came to this place, with the letters brought by the son of Mr. Adams[5] from France; for your care of which I thank you. Appropos,

[4] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[5] John Quincy Adams.

did you hear him say anything of Hounds which, the Marqs. de la Fayette has written to me, were committed to his care?[6] If he really brought them (and if he did not I am unable to account for the information) it would have been civil in the young Gentleman to have dropped me a line respecting the disposal of them, especially as war is declared against the canine species in New York, and they being strangers, and not having formed any alliances for self-defence, but on the contrary, distressed and friendless may have been exposed not only to war, but to pestilence and famine also. If you can say any thing on this subject pray do so.

I thank you for the several articles of intelligence contained in your letter, and for the propositions respecting a coinage of Gold, Silver and Copper; a measure which in my opinion is become indispensably necessary: Mr. Jefferson's ideas upon this subject are plain and simple; well adapted, I think, to the nature of the case, as he has exemplified by the plan.[7] Without a Coinage, or without some stop can be put to the cutting and clipping of money; our Dollars, pistareens &c. will be converted (as Teague says) into *five* quarters; and a man must travel with a pair of money scales in his pocket, or run the risk of receiving Gold at one fourth less by weight than it counts.

I have ever been a friend to adequate Congressional powers; consequently wish to see the ninth article of the Confederation amended and extended: Without these powers we cannot support a national character, and must appear contemptable in the eyes of Europe; but to you My Dr. Sir, I will candidly confess, that in my opinion, it is of little avail to give these to

[6] The hounds were taken care of by Dr. John Cochran, while in New York, and sent to Mount Vernon in a Captain Packard's sloop. John Quincy Adams had evidently found the task of escorting them across the ocean distasteful. Grayson's answer to this letter is dated Sept. 5, 1785, and is in the *Washington Papers*.

[7] Jefferson's plan, which used the dollar as the unit and divided it decimally, was the one adopted by Congress.

Congress: the members seem to be so much afraid of exerting those which they already have, that no opportunity is slipped of surrendering them, or referring the exercise of them, to the States individually: instance your late ordinance respecting the disposal of the Western Lands; in which no State, with the smallest propriety, could have obtruded an interference. No doubt but the information of Congress from the back Country is better than mine respecting the operation of this ordinance; but I have understood from some sensible people therefrom, that besides running[8] they do not know where to purchase, the Lands are of so versatile a nature, that to the end of time they will not, by those who are acquainted therewith, be purchased either in Townships or by square miles: this, if I recollect right, was the sentiment I delivered to you on the first mention of the matter; but past experience you said was brought forward in support of the measure, and appealed to for the issue. I submitted therefore to its decision, but still retained my opinion of the matter.

We have got the Potomac navigation in hand: workmen are employ'd under the best manager and assistants we could obtain, at the Falls of Shenandoah and Seneca; and I am happy to inform you that, upon a critical examination of them by the Directors, the manager and myself, we are unanimously of opinion that the difficulties at these two places, do not exceed the expectations we had formed of them; and that the navigation thro' them, might be effected without the aid of Locks: how far we may have been deceived with respect to the first (as the water, tho' low may yet fall) I shall not decide; but we are not mistaken I think in our conjectures of the other. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.[9]

[8] Carelessness of the "Letter Book" recorder. The meaning seems to be that besides the difficulty in running boundary lines.

[9] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785.

Sir: Both your letters of the 16th. have come safe. As you have engaged the clover seed of Mr. Wormeley's manager, I will take one bushel of it; tho' I had no idea of giving so high a price, as I could have got the same quantity from Philada. (I suppose equally good) for half the sum. If you send it to the care of Mr. Hartshorne in Alexanda. it will come safe, and the sooner it is done the better: pay for it out of the first money you receive for any use.

I am willing to take your Wheat, if it is free from the Fly, well cleaned and of good quality; provided it is delivered at my Mill, the road to which (by being less used) is better than that to Alexandria or Dumfries. My prices are always governed by the Alexandria *Cash* market; for I neither give more, nor expect it for less: The price current there at present (according to Richard's Gazette) is five shillings; but the state of our Trade at this time is so uncertain, that it is almost impossible to determine whether it will be more, or less.

If the present restriction of our commerce continues, the manufacturing of Wheat must be broken up altogether; as the West India markets which afford the greatest demands for our Flour, are shut against our Vessels. If you choose to take the certainty of five shillings for your wheat, it may be a bargain at that, provided you determine immediately: or if you prefer to abide by the rise, or fall of the Alexandria market, I am willing to do this also, if you will fix a period at which you shall determine to accept the price which is then existing; by this I mean, (and it is necessary to declare it in order to avoid misunderstandings,) that if you should be from the first of October to the first of April, for instance, in delivering your Crop,

I shall not think myself under an obligation to allow the highest price that may be given within those periods; because the price may rise to six shillings, and then *fall* to five; according to the demand arising from circumstances. It would therefore be as unreasonable for you to expect that I should give the highest price at which wheat had sold within the before mentioned periods, as for me to suppose that you ought to take the lowest. However, to be more clearly understood (if the price is to be regulated by the Alexandria *cash* market, for I shall not be governed by what they offer in *goods*), it must be the price of the day on which you determine to take it: that is, if it should start from 5/. and keep rising 'till, by the first of Decr. it had reached 6/., and on that day you inform me personally, or by letter, that you will take the market price, I shall think myself obliged to allow 6/. for your Crop: On the other hand, if you expect the price will get higher, and wait for its doing so until it falls to 4/., I will pay no more than 4/. for it.

I have been thus explicit because I dislike disputes and wish to avoid them; which makes it necessary to mention another case which sometimes happens; and that is, that what a few bushels of wheat may sell for; or what a Merchant, when he has got a vessel nearly loaded, may give rather than detain her at high charges, is not to be considered as the market price. You are not in a situation (having your wheat to transport from a distant part) to take advantage of the case last mentioned; and a few bushels of particular wheat, or wheat for particular uses, can have no influence upon the general price which is always very well established in a place of such trade as Alexandria. After all I confess it would be more agreeable to me to fix a price between ourselves: but I cannot at the time exceed 5/. as that is the price now current.

When you come down in Octr. I shall be glad to see you here; by that time I expect to have the accounts against my

Tenants brought into some kind of order. If you could engage me about 250 wt. of good fall butter, from such farmers as you can depend upon for the quality and their punctuallity. I should be obliged to you: if you let me have your wheat, the butter may come down occasionally with that. I am, etc.[10]

To JOHN RAWLINS

Mount Vernon, August 29, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 20th. of this month, only came to my hands by the last Post, or I would have replied to it sooner.

I have a room 32 by 24 feet, and 16 feet pitch, which I want to finish in stucco; it is my intention to do it in a plain neat style; which, independantly of its being the present taste, (as I am inform'd) is my choice. The Chimney is in the centre of the longest side, for which I have a very elegant marble piece; directly opposite thereto is a Venetian window, of equal breadth and pitch of the room; on each side of the chimney is a door, leading into other rooms, and on each of the short sides is a door and window.

I mention these things that you may be apprized of the sort of work; the time it may take you to execute it, and that you may inform me upon what terms; and also, if you are inclined to undertake it, that you may have leisure to think of a design. The season being so far advanced, I had given up the idea of doing anything to the room this year; but if I could enter upon the work with well founded assurances of accomplishing it soon, I am ready and willing to go on with it immediately; having by me stucco, and seasoned plank for the floor and other parts (if necessary) and good Joiners of my own to execute what may be wanting in their way.

[10] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

You will please to let me hear from you without delay on this subject, and I pray you to be explicit; because, as I would undertake it at once, or not at all this year, I should like to know your terms and sentiments precisely, that I may govern myself accordingly. I am, etc.[11]

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, August 29, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 25th. in answer to mine of the preceeding week, came safe. At the time I wrote that letter, I was uninformed of the circumstances with which you have since made me acquainted; however, you will be at no loss from the contents of it, to discover that I had in contemplation *Bargains,* which, from the quantity of Goods at Market, scarcity of cash according to newspaper Accounts, distress of the Trade, and the mode of selling, I thought might probably be obtained: but if I am mistaken herein, I shall content myself with the few *marked* articles, or such of them as can be had cheap. Fine Jaconette[12] Muslin (apron width) is what Mrs. Washington wants, and about five or seven yards would do. As the Arrack is in large Casks, and new, I decline taking any.

If Mr. O'Donnell[13] should feel an inclination to visit this part of Virginia, I shall be happy in seeing him: and if, instead of furnishing him with a *letter* of introduction, you should change the mode and introduce him in your own propria personae, it would add much to the pleasure of the visit. Before your letter was received,[14] from my reading, or rather from an

[11] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[12] In the text of this letter, printed in a sales catalogue in 1907–8, this word is "Jaccanet."

[13] Owner of the ship from India and China, which brought the goods to the port of Baltimore.

[14] Tilghman's letter (in the *Washington Papers* under date of Aug. 25, 1785) described the crew of O'Donnell's ship.

imperfect recollection of what I had read, I had conceived an idea that the Chinese, tho' droll in shape and appearance, were yet white.

I am glad to hear that my packet to Mr. Smith had got safely to hand, as there were papers of consequence transmitted. I expect some other Documents for my Law suit in the course of a few days, from our Attorney General; which I shall take the liberty of enclosing to you, to be forwarded to Mr. Smith; and as I seem to be in the habit of giving you trouble, I beg the favor of you to cause the enclosed to be delivered. I leave it open for your perusal, my reason for it is, that thereby seeing my wants, you may be so obliging as to let me know your opinion of Mr. Rawlins with respect to his abilities and diligence as a workman; whether he is reckoned moderate or high in his charges; and whether at this time there is much call for a workman of his profession, in Baltimore; for on this I presume his high or moderate terms will greatly depend.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best respects to Mrs. Tilghman, and thanks her for her obliging assurance of chusing the articles she wants perfect in their kind. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.

P. S. Since writing the above Mrs. W——n, requests me to add, that if any fine thin handkerchiefs with striped or worked borders are to be had, she would be glad to get six of them.[15]

To ARTHUR ST. CLAIR

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 21st. ulto. inclosing a letter written in behalf of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Pennsylvania on the 9th. of July in the preceding year, came to this

[15] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

place in my absence on a tour up the river Potomac with the Directors, to examine the obstructions and to point out a mode for the improvement and extension of its navigation.

I am perfectly convinced that if the first institution of this Society had not been parted with, 'ere this we should have had the country in an uproar, and a line of separation drawn between this society and their fellow citizens. The alterations which took place at the last general Meeting have quieted the clamours which in many of the States were rising to a great height; but I have not heard yet of the incorporation of any Society by the State to which it belongs, wch is an evidence in my mind, that the jealousies of the people are rather asleep than removed on this occasion.

I am always made happy, when I hear that any of my fellow labourers have received appointments that may in some measure compensate them for their past services and losses in the late revolution: I feel it in two respects, first, as it benefits the individual, and next, as it is a testimony of public gratitude, be assured then My Dr. Sir, that your appointment to the office which you now hold[16] gave me much pleasure, as I am told the emoluments of it are handsome. My best wishes will ever attend you: with sincere esteem and regard, I am, etc.[17]

To DOCTOR JOHN COCHRAN

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 9th. by Capt. Packard accompanying the Hounds sent by the Marqs. de la Fayette to your care for me, came safely to my hands a few days ago; for the trouble you have had with the latter I offer you my thanks; and if any

[16] In the Pennsylvania Council of Censors.

[17] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

expences have been incurred previous to their reimbarkation at New York, I will pay them upon the first notice.

I persuade myself you are too well convinced my Dr. Doctor of my friendship, and of my inclination to promote your interest or wishes, to doubt my ready compliance with the request of your letter (respecting the office of Continental treasurer) if it comported with the line of conduct which I had prescribed for my government. But from my knowledge of the composition of Congress, the State politics of its members, and their endeavors to fill every civil office with a citizen from their own State, if not altogether, at least by compromise, that I took up an early determination not to hazard the mortification of a refusal, or of the passing by my application; by not asking *anything* from it, and to this resolution I was further prompted by the numberless applications with which it was impracticable, and in many instances would have been improper, for me to comply. Except in a single one, and that not pointed to any office directly, I have never gone beyond the general recommendation which accompanied my resignation, nor do I *believe* I ever shall.

Mrs. Washington who does not enjoy good health, presents her compliments to, and offers best wishes for Mrs. Cochran and yourself to which please to add and accept those of Dear Sir etc.[18]

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, August 31, 1785.

Dr. Sir: In my absence from home on a tour up this river, to view the nature of it and to direct the improvements agreeably the Acts of Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland; the enclosed

[18] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

memoirs arrived here, covered by a letter, of which the following is an extract, from a member of Congress.[19]

As I am fully persuaded it is your wish to transmit to posterity a true history of the Revolution, and of course you desire to receive every information which will enable you to do justice to the principal Actors therein; it cannot be unpleasing to you to receive a narrative of unadorned facts which serve to bring forward circumstances which, in some measure, may be unknown to you: I therefore make no apology for transmitting the enclosed; nor shall I do more than hint to you, the propriety of keeping the Marquis's wishes in this business, behind the Curtain; your own good sense must dictate the measure, and furnish the reason for it.

The noble, conspicuous, and disinterested part which this Nobleman has acted on the American theatre deserves all the gratitude which this Country can render him, and all the eloge which the pen of a faithful historian can bestow, with its appearing to be the object of his wishes.

The family is as well as usual; Mrs. Stuart has been sick, but is now getting better. Mrs. Washington does not enjoy good health, but joins me in best respects to Mrs. Gordon. I am, etc.[20]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

My dr. Marqs.: Since my last to you, I have been favored with your letters of the 11th. and 13th. of May by young Mr. Adams, who brought them to New York, from whence they came safely to this place by the Post: the first is a *Cypher;* and for the

[19] At this point the "Letter Book" has the footnote reference: "See Mr. McHenry's Letter to me dated 1st. Augt. 1785;" but this letter is not now found in either the *Washington Papers* or the *McHenry Papers.*

[20] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

communications therein contained I thank you: My best wishes will always accompany your undertakings; but remember my dear friend it is a part of the military art to reconnoitre and *feel* your way, before you engage too deeply. More is oftentimes effected by regular approaches, than by an open assault; from the first too, you may make a good retreat; from the latter (in case of repulse) it rarely happens.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Adams[21] will bring the British ministry to some explanation respecting the western posts. Nothing else can, I conceive, disturb the tranquillity of these States; but if I am mistaken in this conjecture, you know my sentiments of, and friendship for you too well to doubt my inclination to serve *you* to the utmost of your wishes, and my powers.

It gives me very singular pleasure to find the court of France relaxing in their demand of Longchamps; to have persisted in it would have been a very embarrassing measure to this Country under the Laws and Constitution of the Federal Government, and those of the several parts which compose it.

The Hounds which you were so obliging as to send me arrived safe, and are of promising appearance; to Monsieur le Compte Doilliamson (if I miscall him, your handwriting is to blame, and in honor you are bound to rectify the error); and in an *especial* manner to his fair Competesse, my thanks are due for this favor: the enclosed letter which I give you the trouble of forwarding contains my acknowledgement of their obliging attention to me on this occasion.

If I recollect right, the letter which was written by the Marquis de St. Simon was on the business of the Cincinnati, and was laid before the general meeting at Philada. in May 1784; consequently, the answer must have proceeded from the Society either especially to him, or generally, thro' the Counts de

[21] John Adams.

Estaing and Rochambeau, who were written to as the heads of the naval and military members of that Society in France; but as all the papers relative to the business of the Society were deposited in the care of the Secretary, General Knox, or the assistant Secretary, Williams,[22] I have them not to refer to; but will make enquiry and inform you or the Marqs. de St. Simon more particularly of the result.

Your constant attention, and unwearied endeavors to serve the interests of these United States, cannot fail to keep alive in them a grateful sensibility of it; and the affectionate regard of all their citizens for you. The footing on which you have established a market for whale oil must be equally pleasing and advantageous to the States which are more immediately engaged in that commerce.

Having heard nothing further of the Jacks which were to be sent to me from Spain, and which by Mr. Carmichael's letter (enclosing one from the Count de Florida Blanca) of the 3d. Decr. were actually purchased for me at that date, I am at a loss to account for the delay, and am apprehensive of some accident. Be this as it may, if you could My Dr. Marquis, thro' the medium of Admiral Suffrein, or by any other means that would not be troublesome, procure me a male or female, or *one* of the former and *two* of the latter, upon the terms mentioned in your letter of the 3d. of May, I should think it a very fortunate event and shou'd feel myself greatly indebted to your friendship. The Mules which proceed from the mixture of these Animals with the horse, are so much more valuable under the care which is usually bestowed on draught cattle by our Negroes, that I am daily more anxious to obtain the means for propagating them.

[22] Otho Holland Williams. He was assistant secretary general of the Society of the Cincinnati.

When George returns from the Springs and gets a little fixed, I will set him about copying your letters to me, which will be better than to hazard the originals at Sea, where an accident might occasion the loss of them to both of us. In my last I informed you of his intended marriage, which I suppose will take place in the early part of next month.

I should have given an earlier acknowledgment of your letters of the 11th. and 13th. of May aforementioned, had I been at home when they came to this place, but at that time I was on a tour up this river with the Directors (Johnson, Lee, Fitzgerald and Gilpin) to examine the obstructions, and to fix upon a plan of operations; which having done, we commenced our labours on the 5th. of last month, under a full persuasion that the work will not prove more arduous than we had conceived before the difficulties were explored. The James River Company, by my last accounts from Richmond, is formed; a meeting of the members was summoned to be held on the 20th. of last month, but what the determinations of it were, I have not yet heard; Nor (so barren are the times) have I a tittle of news to communicate to you; the several assemblies are in their recesses but will be addressed I presume at their autumnal meetings by the commercial interests of the United States to vest Powers in Congress to regulate the Trade of the Union which they see clearly must be directed by one head in order to obtain consistency and respectability at home and abroad. I am, etc.[23]

To MARIE GABRIEL ELÉANOR, COMTE D'OILLIAMSON

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

Sir: I have just received seven very fine Hounds, for which, the Marqs. de la Fayette informs me, I am indebted to your

[23] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

goodness. I know not in what terms to acknowledge my gratitude for the obligation, but pray you to be assured that I have a due sense of the honor; and feel in a particular manner the force of the goodness of Madame la Comptesse, to whom the Marqs. adds, I am beholden for a *favorite* hound. I pray you to offer my best respects, and to make my acknowledgment of this favor, acceptable to her: at the sametime I beg you to assure her that her favorite shall not suffer under my care, but become the object of my particular attention. I have the honor, etc.[24]

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

My Dr. Humphreys: In the latter part of July I wrote to you very fully, since which I have received your favor of May. As nothing has occurred since that period worthy of observation, except that the Indians, suposed to be instigated thereto by the B—— are getting more and more out of humour, this letter will be shorter than I usually write to you.

I find by your last that your time has been more occupied by your official duty than I had conceived; for, to be frank, I supposed that amusements more than business had been the occasion of the brevity of your letters to me.

The times are dull with us, the Assemblies are in their recess; and the Merchants are preparing petitions to them respectively to enlarge the powers of Congress for Commercial purposes. In Congress I understand diversity of opinion prevails respecting the extent of these powers. They are also deliberating on the establishment of a Mint for the Coinage of Gold, Silver and copper; but nothing final is yet resolved on respecting either. Our winter has been severe, but different (in the

[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

middle States) from the one you last saw in America; it was long, wet and disagreeable. We are just emerging from a drought which it was supposed eight days ago, would have annihilated the Indian Corn in the lower parts of this, and the neighbouring States; and tho' it has been raining incessantly for several days past, I am of opinion that a great deal of the corn is irrecoverably lost for want of the farina (the tassel being dry) to impregnate the young shoots. The calamity which you apprehended from the drought which had followed the hard Winter in France, has yielded I hope, to more pleasing prospects.

I thank you for your attention to the Medal which was voted for me by Congress,[25] I expected it was to have remained on the Journals of that honl. Body as a dead letter; and never having hinted, so I never intended to hint my knowledge of such a Vote; or my apprehension of the effect of it, to any one in power or in Office. You may believe me sincere when I assure you that I am, etc.[26]

To LAMAR, HILL, BISSETT & CO.[27]

Mount Vernon, September 1, 1785.

Gentn: I am honored with your favor of the 22d. of June. As I have been very unlucky hitherto, in the transportation of Wine (in the common Craft of the Country) from one port, or one from one river to another; I had rather the old Maderia ordered by Mr. Hill[28] for my use should remain with you (as I am not in immediate want) until a conveyance may offer directly to Alexandria. But if this is not likely to happen soon, and you should think it safe to Ship it to the address of

[25] On the occasion of the evacuation of Boston in 1776.
[26] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[27] Of Madeira.
[28] Henry Hill, in Philadelphia.

Doctr. Taylor[29] of Norfolk; I should be glad in that case, to have it well secured against adulteration; for I had rather lose the whole, than to have part taken out and the deficiency supplied with water, which is too common a practice with the river Shippers. Or if neither of these is done, I would next pray that Doctr. Taylor may be requested to detain the Wine in his cellar until a conveyance, on which he can rely, may offer to Alexandria, or to my house which is nine miles below on the bank of the river. I am, etc.

To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, September 3, 1785.

Sir: I am now about to inform you of the reason why I suffered your letter of the 27th. of April, with its enclosures, to remain so long unacknowledged.

In an absence of almost nine years from home, my private concerns had got so much deranged, and my accounts and papers, by the frequent hasty removal of the latter to get them out of the reach of the enemy when their shipping appeared, had got into such a jumble and confusion that it was next to impossibility for me, without spending much time, to adjust the former: I still hoped however that after awhile I should have been able to accomplish it, and that long 'ere this I should have sent you a statement of the account as it stands betwen us. But reckoning without my host, I have been obliged to hire a Clerk to settle all my accounts, and to take this business off my hands; as from a variety of circumstances I found it impracticable for me to attend to it myself.

Inclosed is his statement of the account between you and me, made out from my books and your return of Sales. The

[29] Dr. James Taylor.

balance from his accot. differs widely from yours; arising first from the charge of Jacob Williams's payment of £178.9.8. to James Hill; whereas £50. only of that sum, according to Lund Washington's accot. (who superintended my business) was received from Williams. Secondly, from £123.7.4½ charged me, as paid by Mr. Wm. Holt, of which I have no account. Thirdly, between £174. charged me as paid to Colo. Lewis, and my credit of £170 *only* which was received from him; and lastly, from the Debts yet due, amounting pr. your List to £175.16.2. The three first of these you will please to enquire into; and the last, to use the most speedy, and which to you may seem the most effectual, means of obtaining them.

The sum which is in your hands, I could wish to have remitted, or an order given me on some Gentleman in Alexandria: Or, which *in part* would answer my purpose equally, I wou'd take one hundred pair of large, strong and well made Negro Shoes, provided I could have them at a reasonable price and by the 20th. of October; formerly I know these were to be had at Norfolk readily; and it is essential for me to know immediately, whether, I may depend upon you for them or not.

The Drought has been so severe in these parts, that my Mill was entirely stopped: the rain which has fallen within these ten days, has done no more than to enable her to grind for my own consumption, when I begin to manufacture I will consign you a parcel of superfine flour, as well to try the Norfolk Market, as to prove a new Miller whom I have lately got, and who comes well recommended to me from some of the best Judges in Pennsylvania.

If you should be able at any time to put me in a way of securing the Debt due to me from Balfour and Baran,[30] it would be rendering me a very acceptable service: Without this, or unless

[30] Balfour & Barrand, merchants of Hampton, Va.

some proof could be had (as I believe the fact undoubtedly is) of the partnership of these Gentlemen or connexion in this business with Messrs. Hanburys of London, I must loose upwards of £2000 by my sale of Flour to them.[31] With great esteem and regard I am, etc.[32]

To CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Sir: I am indebted to you for your several favors of the 20th. of Decr. introdultory of Mr. de Chateaufort,[33] of the 15th. of Feby. and 25th. of March, which I should not have suffered to have remained so long unacknowledged, if anything had occurred, the relation of which could have compensated for the trouble of reading my letter.

Long as I have waited for such an event, nothing has yet happen'd of much importance in our political movements, and the Assemblies of the different States being now in their recesses, nothing probably will occur 'till they have met. In the meanwhile the mercantile interest *feeling* the necessity of giving a controuling power to Congress to regulate the trade of this Country, have prepared, and are now preparing Addresses to their respective Assemblies for this purpose. They are now clearly convinced that this power cannot be exercised with propriety unless one system pervades the whole Union, and is made competent to the ends. It has happened in this instance as in the revolution itself, that the means which G: B. pursues to obtain advantages, defeat her own ends; for I am certain, that if she had forborne to tax our trade with those restrictions and, imposts, which are laid on it by Acts of Parliament, or

[31] The flour had been furnished in the year 1775.
[32] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[33] French consul for South Carolina.

orders of the King in Council, that half a century would not have produced those powers in Congress, which, or more than probably will be given to them in a few months, and by which equal restrictions and duties may be laid; and in the interim, sorry I am to add, she would have monopolized in a very great degree, the commerce of the United States.

At length Congress have adopted a mode for disposing of the western Lands; but I confess it does not strike me as a very eligible one: however mine is only an opinion, and I wish to be mistaken in it, as the fund wou'd be very productive and afford great relief to the public creditors if the Lands meet with a ready sale.

Treaty has been holden with the Western Indians at Fort McIntosh on the Ohio, (twenty-five miles below Pittsburgh) and advantageous terms entered into with those who met, for they ceded without any compensation as large a District, North-west of that river as we have any occasion for at present: but it should seem that others of their respective Tribes are dissatisfied, and keep the settlers of the Western Territory in a state of disquietude. This I am persuaded will be the case whilst the British retain the Posts within the American lines, and when they will be surrendered, is not for me to decide.

Congress have had also under contemplation a Mint for the coinage of Gold, Silver and Copper; a committee has reported in favor of the measure, but I believe no ultimate decision is yet come to on the subject, by that Honl. Body.

From the last European accounts we have reason to hope that the clouds which seemed to be gathering in your hemisphere, will yield to a tranquil sky; and Peace, with all its blessings will spread its mantle over the threatened Lands. My first wish is to see the sons and Daughters of the World mixing as one family, enjoying the sweets of social intercourse, and reciprocal

advantages: the Earth certainly is sufficient to contain us all, and affords every thing necessary to our wants, if we would be friendly and endeavour to accommodate one another. Why then should we wrangle, and why should we attempt to infringe the Rights and properties of our Neighbours? But lest you shou'd suppose that I am about to turn preacher, I will only add that, with the highest esteem and consideration, I have the honor, etc.

P. S. I had not the pleasure of seeing Mr. de Chateaufort: upon the receipt of your letter of the 20th. of December, enclosed to me by that Gentleman from Philada.; I wrote to him praying that I might be honored with his company on his way to Carolina; but he found it more convenient at that hot season to go thither by Sea in the Packett.[34]

To DAVID HENLEY

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Sir: I am sorry the enclosed account should be brought against me in my private character: it is a fact which I thought had been well known to all the public Departments, and to those employed by the public, that expences of the nature of Otis and Henley's Accots. (which is for clothing for the servants I was obliged to employ in my public character) were paid from the public funds.

If I mistake not Otis & Henley were Agents for the purpose of supplying clothing (or materials for it) for the Army; to them in this character I apply'd; and never until the enclosed account was presented, had I any other idea of the matter, than that the amount had been settled for by them in their public

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On September 5 Washington also wrote a brief acknowledgment to Baron Viomenil for his introductory letter to De Chateaufort. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book."

accounts. As this is not the case, had it been presented to me whilst I had authority so to do, I should have ordered the paymaster to have discharged it; but as the matter now stands, I can do no more than certify that the Goods were receiv'd on public account for my use; for I really cannot pay for them out of my private purse. It is to be regretted that the matter has lain over so long. I am, etc.

Certificate.

I certify that the Goods which are charged within were required on public account to clothe the servants who attended me in my public character; and is a proper charge against the United States, not against me as a private person, who derived no other benefit therefrom.[35]

To MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX

Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I am your debtor for two letters, one of the 12th. of Decemr., the other of the 8th. of April. Since the receipt of the first, I have paid my respects to you in a line by a Majr. Swan; but as it was introductory only of him, it requires an apology, rather than entitles me to a credit in our epistolary correspondence.

If I had as good a nack my dear Marquis, as you have at saying handsome things, I would endeavor to pay you in kind for the flattering expressions of your letters, having an ample field to work in; but as I am a clumsy workman in the manufactory of compliments, I must first profess my unworthiness of those which you have bestowed on me, and my inability to meet you

[35] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

on that ground; and therefore will not expose myself in the attempt.

It gives me great pleasure to find by my letters from France, that the dark clouds which hung over your hemisphere, are vanishing before the all-chearing Sunshine of peace. My first wish is to see the blessings of it diffused through all Countries, and among *all* ranks in every Country; and that we should consider ourselves as the children of a common parent, and be disposed to acts of brotherly kindness towards one another. In that case all restrictions of trade would vanish; we should take your Wines, your fruits and surplusage of other articles: and give you in return our oils, our Fish, Tobacco, naval stores &ca.; and in like manner we should exchange produce with other Countries, to our reciprocal advantage: the Globe is large enough, why then need we wrangle for a small spot of it? If one Country cannot contain us another should open its arms to us. But these halcyon days (if they ever did exist) are now no more; a wise providence, I presume, has ordered it otherwise, and we must go on in the old way disputing, and now and then fighting, until the Globe itself is dissolved.

I rarely go from home; but my friends in and out of Congress sometimes tell me what is on the carpet; to hand it to you afterwards would be a circuitous mode, and altogether idle, as I am persuaded you have correspondents at New York who give it to you at first hand, and can relate it with more clearness and perspicuity than I can. I give the chief of my time to rural amusements; but I have lately been active in instituting a plan which, if success attends it and of which I have no doubt, may be productive of great political as well as commercial advantages to the States on the Atlantic, especially the middle ones; it is the extending and improving the inland

navigations of the rivers Potomac and James, and communicating them with the Western waters by the shortest and easiest portages and good roads. Acts have passed the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland authorising private Adventurers to undertake the work; Companies in consequence have been incorporated; and that on this river is begun, but when we come to the difficult parts of it we shall require an Engineer of skill and practical knowledge in this branch of business; and from that Country where these kind of improvements have been conducted with the greatest success. With every great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.[36]

*To COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

My dear Count: Since I had the honor to address you last, I have been favored with your letters of the 9th. of Septr. and 24th. of Feby. The first enclosing a list of the New promotions, and additional members of the Society of the Cincinnati as consented by the King; for which I thank you, as it will enable me to give answers to those Gentlemen who, unacquainted I presume, with his Majesty's pleasure, are still offering to me their pretensions to be admitted into this Order.

Every occasion that assures me of your health, encreases my happiness, as I have a sincere respect, and an affectionate regard for you. My time now, as the Marquis de la Fayette has informed you, is spent in rural employments, and in contemplation of those friendships which the revolution enabled me to form with so many worthy characters of your Nation, through whose assistance I can now sit down in my calm

[36] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

retreat; and under my own Vine, and my own fig tree, enjoy those pleasures which are rarely to be found in the more active pursuits of life, on a larger theatre.

I hope the storms which rumbled about you all the Winter, and wch. seemed to portend so much mischief, are dispersed; and that a tranquil sky has succeeded. Although it is against the profession of Arms, I wish to see all the World in Peace. How long this blessing may be dispensed to us, I know not, the British still hold the Posts upon the Lakes, within the Territory of the United States; and discover no inclination (that has come to my knowledge) of giving them up. With respect to the Spaniards, I do not think the Navigation of the Mississippi is an object of great importance at present, when it becomes so, when the Banks of the Ohio are thick settled, and when the fertile plains of that Western Country are covered with people they will not be deprived of natural advantages.

I am very thankful for the polite attentions of Madame de Rochambeau, to whom I pray you to present my best respects, and to any of our worthy compatriots in the late War. Mrs. Washington, sensible of your kind remembrance of her, begs you to accept her Compliments. With sincere friendship and perfect attachment I am etc.

I take the liberty of putting the enclosed letter under your cover as it contains original papers wch. might be a loss to Captn. de Pusignan.[37]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

Dear Sir: The man who at present lives with me in the capacity of a Housekeeper, or Household Steward, will leave me

[37] From the original in the *Rochambeau Papers*.

in a day or two; which (until his place can be supplied) will throw a great additional weight on Mrs. Washington. I therefore beg, if you, or Mr. Moyston,[38] should have met with a person whom you think would answer my purposes (as described in my former letters) that you would engage him, or her absolutely instead of conditionally, and send him (or her) absolutely, instead of conditionally, and send him on by the Stage. In the meanwhile, if one should offer to my liking here, my engagement shall be conditional. No disappointmt. therefore can happen to the person engaged by you.

Inclosed is a letter to Mr. Frauncis (als. black Sam) late of New York, now of some place in the Jerseys. I leave it open for your perusal, to be forwarded, or destroyed, as circumstances may require. If you should have succeeded at Philadelphia, or are in the way of doing so, the latter will take place; if not, the sooner it can be got to his hands, the better. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Biddle. I am etc. [H.S.P.]

To SAMUEL FRAUNCES

Mount Vernon, September 7, 1785.

Sir: As no person can judge better, of the qualifications necessary to constitute a good Housekeeper, or Household steward, than yourself, for a family which has a good deal of company and wishes to entertain them in a plain, but genteel style; I take the liberty of asking you if there is any such an one within your reach, whom you think could be induced to come to me on reasonable wages. I would rather have a man than a woman, but either will do, if they can be recommended for their honesty, sobriety, and knowledge of their profession;

[38] Edward Moyston.

which in one word, is to relieve Mrs. Washington from the drudgery of ordering and seeing the Table properly covered, and things œconomically used: nothing more therefore need be said to inform you of a character that would suit me, than what is already mentioned.

The wages I now give to a man who is about to leave me in order to get married (under which circumstances he would not suit me) is about one hundred Dollars pr. annum; but for one who understands the business perfectly, and stands fore in all other respects, I would go as far as one hundred and twenty five dollars. Sometime ago I wrote to Colo. Biddle, and to Mr. Moyston (who keeps the City Tavern in Philada.) to try if they could procure me such a person as I want; I therefore beg, if you know of one that would suit me, and is to be had upon the terms above, and who can attend properly to a large family (for mine is such, with a good many workmen), that you would immediately inform Colo. Biddle of it before any engagement is entered into by you on my behalf, lest one should be provided at Philada. and embarrassments arise from the different engagements. I am sorry to give you so much trouble, but I hope you will excuse it in, Sir Yr. etc.[39]

To JOHN DE NEUFVILLE

Mount Vernon, September 8, 1785.

Sir: I have lately been honored with your favors of the 10th and 15th of March. Until the latter explained the mistake of the former, I was puzzled to get at the meaning of it; because, I did not recollect that I had ever made application to your Son for the loan of any money; but since the subject has been started, I will take the liberty of pursuing it.

[39] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I am a member of a Company in this State, who associated many years ago for the purpose of reclaiming what is called the Great Dismal Swamp near Norfolk. The war gave considerable interruption, indeed almost put an entire stop to the progress of the business; but in May last the members (for the first time since the war) had a meeting, and resolved to prosecute the work with vigor: for this purpose they are inclined to borrow money on interest; and to import, if they can do it upon advantageous terms, a number of Hollanders, or Germans, as being best acquainted with the nature of the work; which is to drain and bank level, low and wet land, which would from its situation, and the quality of its soil, be invaluable if accomplished.

Individually, the members possess considerable property, as a company they have little money at command; but would I believe, bind themselves jointly and severally for the repayment of the principal sum borrowed, in a given number of years; and for such interest as may be agreed upon annually: and as a collateral security they would moreover, I imagine, mortgage the Estate which they are about to improve.

Under this Statement of the matter, permit me to ask you frankly, if four or five thousand pounds could be borrowed in Amsterdam; at what interest and for how long a term? and whether it is a matter which could be easily accomplished, to import about three hundred laborers (a few women among them would be no objection), for what time they might be engaged and upon what wages? and what expence would attend the importation?

Since my last to you I have had the pleasure of your son's company at this place; he appeared at the time to be in good health, and I hope has been able to put your business in this Country on a more favourable footing, than your letter of the

15th. of June last year indicated; in a word, I hope it is placed on as good a footing as the nature of the case will admit. I have the honor, etc.[40]

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: The enclosed was put into my hands yesterday; and I take the liberty of forwarding it by the post today, hoping if no person is appointed in the place of Mr. Massey, that your Excellency for the reason assigned by the Maryland Commrs. and on account of the advanced season, will cause it to be done as soon as convenient.[41] With very great esteem and respect, I have the honor, etc.[40]

To THOMAS JOHNSON AND THOMAS SIM LEE

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Gentn: Your favor of the 30th. ulto. did not reach me until the 8th. instant; I went the next day to Alexandria and laid it before Colos. Fitzgerald and Gilpin, who with himself, acceded fully to the propriety of your proposal of buying servants. Of this, the Secretary was directed to inform you; also of our sentiments respecting the hire of negroes by the year, and to ask your opinion of the number necessary, and of the terms on which to employ them.

Colo. Gilpin has lately seen Mr. Stuart, who informed him that fifty hands were then employed at Seneca, and in his opinion going on very well until the waters were swelled by

[40] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[41] Henry answered (September 26): "Your Favor covering Mr. Deakins's Letter I received this Morning. As soon as Mr. Massey's Resignation was handed to me, the Appointment of Mr. Neville was made and sent out to him with a Copy of the Resolution of Assembly." Henry's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

the late rains. He and I (if I am not prevented by company which I have some reason to expect about that time) intend to be at Seneca on Wednesday the 21st., and at the Great Falls at Eight oclock next morning; where we are to meet Colo. Fitzgerald for the purpose of viewing for our private satisfaction, the place talked of for the Canal; and the water between the Great and little falls. Mr. Stuart informed Colo. Gilpin that he had never seen the Butcher from Fredk. town; nor had he received an ounce of provisions from him.

I am sorry to receive so unfavourable a report from Shenandoah as your letter contains; I hope it will mend, or the cause must be removed. If the health of Mr. Johnson, and the circumstances of Mr. Lee would permit them to visit that place now and then; it would, I am persuaded, have a happy effect: the eye of a Director will be of service to the Conductors. With very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[42]

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, September 10, 1785.

Sir: My last letter to you was so full, that I should not have troubled you again at this early period, but to observe as I did before, that upon reading the Proclamation which I then enclosed (and which I had scarce time to run over before it was dispatched), it appeared to me that as it forbid in general terms, the settlement of Lands upon the western waters, it might be necessary for me to adduce the subsequent Act of the King's Governor; by which the military rights under that Proclamation were recognized, and exempted from the restriction thereof. Accordingly, I wrote to our Attorney General Mr. Randolph, for a certified copy thereof; under which

[42] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the warrants for surveying these claims were directed to be issued; but in some measure he misconceived my request. However, his answer and reasoning applies with as much force to the order of Council, as it does to the instruction which gave rise to it; I therefore send his letters with a Certificate of the Governor and the seal of the Commonwealth to give validity to the Acts wch. have been already forwarded to you from the Registers office under the direction of Mr. Harvie.

My title to the Land in dispute, in my own judgment, is so clear, that I can scarce conceive what my opponents will urge, that can have the least weight with an impartial Count and Jury; but as I apprehend there will be some management in obtaining the latter, it may not be amiss to apprize you, that from my best information (and a gentleman on whom I can depend, told me that he had it from Mr. Prothonotary Scott, brother to my principal opponent) a majority of the occupants settled on the Land after my Patent had actually issued, and consequently in his opinion, could not have the shadow of a claim. Putting my military right then, and all the steps which were taken in consequence of it, out of the question; my improvement (admitting there never was more than one) which stands on the Land to this day, and which was acknowledged by themselves to be there when the Defendants first came to it, will entitle me, for settlement and pre-emption rights, to 1400 acres under our Laws, as you may perceive by the authentic documents already sent you: and these 1400 acres, without the aid of an irregular form and unnatural extension, would comprehend James Scott's farm, and I presume all those which were seated before I obtained my Patent. It appears to me therefore that in one way or other, they must be overthrown.

It has been reported to me (and as *report* only I give it) that the Defendants are preparing to remove off. Whether, if true,

the measure proceeds from a conviction of the futility of their claim, or that they mean to be prepared against the worst, or, as it was said whilst I was out, their only design was to gain time, I shall not decide: but be it as it may, as they have withheld the Land from me ten or twelve years after all the admonition I could give, and the favorable offers which have been made them, and finally have put me to the expence and trouble of bringing and supporting Ejectments, it is my wish and desire, whether they leave the land voluntarily, or are compelled to do so by a course of Law, that you will sue them respectively for Trespasses, rents or otherwise as you shall judge best and most proper to obtain justice for me. I should be glad to hear that this and my former letter had got safe to hand. I am, etc.[42]

To WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, September 14, 1785.

Sir: Colo. Wm. Fitzhugh of Maryland has this day requested me, to enter his name for one share of the Potomac navigation; of which I give you this information: he has also deposited in my hands ten pounds for the first and second advances thereon; which I will pay you when I come next to town, or to your order at any time.

I should take it very kind of you to forward the enclosed letter by the first safe consequence; it contains a summons of some consequence to me, I am, etc.[43]

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, September 14, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Rawlins brought me your favor of the 31st. ulto., and I thank you for sending him; he is to furnish me a

[42] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

design for my room, and an estimate of the cost; after which I shall be better able to make an estimate of his conscience. When Mr. ODonnal[44] has determin'd on his plan, I shall expect to hear from you.

Enclosed is the packet mentioned in my last, for Mr. Smith of Carlisle which I pray you to send by a *safe* rather than the first opportunity which may offer to that place.

With great truth I am, etc.

P. S. Since writing the above, Mr. Fitzhugh of your State has informed Mrs. Washington that there is, or was very fine and pretty Dimmity Muslin selling on board the Indian Ship at half a dollar pr. yard: if this is now the case, she desires me to tell you that she would be much obliged to you for getting her two or three pieces.[45]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, September 16, 1785.

Dear Sir: It was not in my power to obtain the enclosed in time, to forward them by the last mail; but they will, I hope, reach you seasonably for your intended meeting on the 26th, by the present mail.

I feel very sensibly, the honor and confidence which has been reposed in me by the James river company; and regret that it will not be in my power to discharge the duties of the office of President of the Board of Directors, with that punctuality and attention which the trust requires. Every service however that I can render, compatible with my other avocations, shall be afforded with pleasure, and I am happy in being associated in the business with Gentlemen so competent to the purposes of their appointment, and from what I have heard of

[44] O'Donnell.

[45] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

the navigation, and seen of the Falls, I think your work may be soon and easily accomplished, and that it will be of great public utility, as well as private emolument to the subscribers when done: for the advantage of both, tho' I believe the business lies in another line, I would earnestly recommend it to you to press the execution of the survey between James river and the navigable waters of the Kanhawa, and a proper investigation of the latter. It will be a source of great commerce with the capitol and in my opinion will be productive of great political consequences to this country: the business of a similar nature, as it respects this river, is at an entire stand. Mr. Massey who was first appointed on the part of this State, having declined acting; the Maryland Commissioner knows of no other in his room, and is unable, tho' ready to proceed.

Besides what appears in the minutes, which are enclosed, it is in contemplation by the Board of Directors of the Navigation of this river, to endeavor to hire a number of Slaves next year as laborers therein, and as the Great Falls are tremendous, and the navigation thereof, in whatever manner it is attempted, will require much skill and practical knowledge in the execution; we propose, before this is undertaken, to invite a proper person from Europe, who has been employed in works of this kind, as a superintendant of it: With respect to the other parts of the river, tho' what are called the Shanandoah Falls are as difficult in my opinion as the Falls of James river, at Westham, we seem to have confidence enough in ourselves to undertake them; and mean to do so without having recourse to either canals or Locks. Thro' all the Falls and rapids *above the Great falls,* we mean to attempt nothing more than to open a strait passage to avoid, as much as possible, currents; giving sufficient depth, and as much smoothness as may be to the surface; and if Rumsey's project fails (of which he has not the smallest

apprehension) to pull the Boats up by chains floated by buoys: the latter, when Ice begins to form, may be slipped and thereby saved; whilst the former rivoted to rocks at bottom, may remain during the intemperate season undisturbed and without injury.

Upon an estimate of the expence of those chains and Buoys, we (that is, the Directors of the Potomac navigation and myself) are of the opinion, without having an eye to the probable advantages which are expected to be derived from Rumsey's mechanical discovery, that it will be infinitely less than what must arise from cutting canals, building Locks, making track paths, &c., as was the design of Ballendine and others; and will have this advantage over them, that when once done, that is when the passage is opened in a straight direction in the natural bed of the river, it is done as it were forever, whereas canals and Locks, besides the natural decay of them, are exposed to much injury from Ice, drift-wood, and even the common freshes; in a word, are never safe where there are such sudden inundations and violent torrents, as the rivers in this country are subject to.

It has so happened that Thursday the 22d inst. is a day of my own appointing to meet the Directors at the Great Falls of this river, for the purpose of examining the place proposed for a canal; and the river and ground from thence to tide water, on which business I expect to be employed (at least to be from home) four or five days.

Altho' I see no impropriety myself in laying the Proceedings of the Potomac Company before the Board of Directors of the James river navigation, it being my wish that every intelligence which one can give to the other should be mutually afforded; yet it is my desire that the act may be considered as transmitted for the private information (if it shou'd convey any light) of yourself and the Directors.

We are endeavoring to engage our miners to bore by the foot; rather than by the day; but as yet have not agreed with any in this way: they ask a shilling, which we think is too much to common labourers we pay 40/ per month; and we find paying the workmen every fortnight, rather troublesome once a month would do better: as they will be frequently moving, we have provided Tents as most convenient and least expensive, for their accommodation.

I find I have been under a mistake with respect to the subscriptions for the James river navigation; I conceived the Books were to lie open 'till the general meeting appointed (as that for this river was) by law; and if the aggregate amounted to more than the sum required by the act, at such meeting they were then to be reduced in the manner therein directed.

The expression of the Law, "the highest point practicable," is certainly too indefinite; and in the hurry which the act passed, the import of it was not sufficiently adverted to: but how far it may be politic for the Potomac Company to meddle in the matter, I will not at this moment undertake to decide; as the concurrence of *two* States is required to effect the Alteration, and as one of them, it is said by those who are unfriendly to the measure, has been surprized into it.

If it would not be too troublesome for your Secretary, it would be a satisfaction to me to receive a copy of your proceedings, With great esteem and sincere friendship, I am, &c.[46]

*To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, September 18, 1785.

Sir: I have received two or three letters from you of late. The clover Seed which was sent to the care of Mr. Hartshorne I

[46] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

have got, and am obliged by the dispatch with which you have sent it.

The great inattention to my Tenants during the nine years that I was absent, and the traffick which they made of my Land (expressly contrary to the Tenor of my Leases) renders it next to impossible for me without being upon the Land, and obtaining oral information, to make out the Accts. or discover in whose possession the Lotts now are precisely. The best sketch I can give, is herewith enclosed; but I do not suppose to be accurate.

The Man from whom you could have obtained the best information respecting the Tenants, their arrearages of Rent, Transferances, &ca. on that Tract of Land which I hold in Ashby's bend (partly in Fauquier and partly in Loudoun Counties) was one Lewis Lamart, but he died last Spring, after having Collected some of the Rents for me; to whom to advise you in the next place, I am at a loss; Captn. Robert Ashby has a pretty good knowledge of some matters, but either he or one of his Son's, stands I believe among the list of delinquents, which may render his information dubious where his knowledge is most perfect.

Besides the Lotts and Tenants mentioned in the list enclosed, there are, or ought to be, several more of the latter on a Tract I have on Chattins run of Goose Creek, adjoining Captn. Robert Ashby; among whom, I presume the Rectors are. But with respect to this Land, I can give less information than on any other. Whether any Leases have ever been given, or not, I am unable to say. What follows, is taken from a Memorandum which I found tied up in the bundle of Leases.

Memm. March 16th. 1774.

Agreed with one —— Thompson for the Land at the upper end of my Chattins run Tract; That is to give him a lease for it at the rate of £5 pr.

hundd. Acres. He is to have all the Land So. Wt. of the branch which runs through the Tract, unless there should be enough for two lotts; in which case he is to have but one Lott. Rent to be pd. the 25th Decr. 1777. Also agreed to let Edwd. Grymes have the Lott he lives on, extending towards Chattins run and Ashbys Mill path for quantity. He also is to have a lease, and to pay at the rate of £5 pr. hundd. acres next Christmas.

Also agreed to Lease Enoch Ashby 150, or 200 acs. upon the back line, and middle run; he paying at the rate of £5 pr. hundd. to commence the 25th. Decr. 1777.

Also was spoke to for the Lott adjoining this and Edwd. Grymes's, by Robt. Ashby for one Richard Watts upon the same terms.

The foregoing was taken upon the Land at the time I was there for the purpose of renting it, but what has happened since, as I have observed to you before, I am unable to inform you. I am willing to preserve good faith with every Tenant; and am ready to fulfil all my engagements with them, not only such as are legal and just, but those that are honorable, nay more, such as have no other claim but upon my generosity, where there shall appear a proper conduct on their part. But where you shall find they have taken advantage of me by paying paper money when Six pence on a Shilling would pay a pound, where they have paid little or no Rents at all, and their sole aim seems to have been to make a prey of me, by bartering and selling my Land, solely for their own emolument, I should have no scruple in any of those cases, or any other, which shall appear unjustifiable, to take advantage of the Covenants in the Leases where they have been given; and to refuse them when they have not, set them aside, and Re-Rent the Land to the highest bidder, and best possible advantage to my Interest.

Enclosed I send you a short power, which may do for the present; and when you come down in October it may be enlarged, and some further light perhaps, thrown on this business. You will observe that the list inclosed does not include

the Rents of the present year. Except in cases where the Tenants are about to remove, and the rents thereby or by other means are endangered; I would wish to avoid making distress until you have more precise information, and have had an interview with me in October; for besides the Ballances which appear to be due by the inclosed list, many of my Leases require an Alienation Rent for every transference; which, at present, I have not time to look into; but will prepare by October; at which time I will put the Leases into your hands. In the meanwhile, it would be well for you to examine each Tenant, that I may know by what authority he came on the Tenement, how far he has complied with the Covenants of the Lease, what Transferences have taken place, and what Rents (by their receipts, or authentic proofs which no doubt every one of them can shew) has been paid. By doing this some line of conduct may be adopted which will avoid evil and bad consequences either to the tenant or myself. I am etc.

PS. If you could transmit, previously to your coming down, an account of the information you get, on the above points, the accts. may be prepared against you arrive here in Octooer.[47]

POWER OF ATTORNEY

[September 18, 1785.]

I do hereby authorize, constitute and appoint Mr. Battaile Muse to be collector of my rents in the Counties of Berkeley, Frederick, Loudon and Fauquier: and do by these presents empower him to settle with the Tenants, and to make distress for the rents on all cases where it shall be found necessary. I also empower him to rent any of my Lotts which are now vacant;

[47] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by William Randolph Hearst, of New York City.

and where he shall find the covenants of the Leases which have already been granted, unattended to by the Tenants, and a disregard of that mutual interest which induced me to dispose of my Lands on the terms therein mentioned, whereby forfeitures are incurred; that he will use every just and proper means to set them aside, and rent them to others on the most advantageous terms for my use, and in my behalf.[48]

To LEVI HOLLINGSWORTH

Mount Vernon, September 20, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th. ulto. did not get to my hands until the 17th. inst: and then came by the Post, for Mr. Jackson is an inhabitant of Red Stone, 250 miles distant from me. I am obliged to him however for having taken notice of a wish of mine which was accidentally expressed before him, more so to you for having facilitated it, and particularly so to Mr. Donaldson for obliging offering to carry it into effect.

I have long been convinced, that the bed of the Potomac before my door, contains an inexhaustable fund of manure; and if I could adopt an easy, simple and expeditious method of raising, and taking it to the land, that it might be converted to useful purposes. Mr. Donaldson's Hippopotamos[49] goes beyond anything I had conceiv'd with respect to the first; but whether the manner of its working would answer my purpose or not is the question; by his using a horse, I fear it will not, as I shall have to go from one hundred to eight hundred or a thousand yards, from high water mark for the mud; tho' I believe any quantity may be had at the lesser distance; the

[48] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[49] Noted in Arthur Donaldson's letter to Washington, Oct. 1, 1785, with an engraving of the "Hippopotamos" and an explanation, clipped from *The Pennsylvania Magazine*, which are in the *Washington Papers*.

depth of water at the greater will not exceed eight feet, and not much swell unless the wind is turbulent.

Under this information, it would give me great satisfaction to have Mr. Donaldson's opinion of the utility of his Hippopotamos for my purposes; as Mud which is many feet deep, and soft, is to be raised at a distance from, and to be brought to the shore when the tide is up, in vessels which draw but little water. And he would add to the favor (if the machine is applicable to my wants) by informing me what kind of a vessel is necessary for its operation; what would be the cost of this vessel, and of the machine I should have to use on it; whether by a model the whole could be constructed by ingenious workmen here; or whether it must be done under his own eye, and in the latter case, what would be the additional expence of getting them from Philadelphia to this place.

The kind offer of Mr. Donaldson, for which I pray you to return him my sincere thanks, of furnishing me with a model, or other information; and your obliging communication thereof has drawn upon you both this trouble; instead therefore of apologizing for giving it, I will assure you that I have a grateful sense of the kindness of you both and am his and your Most Obt. &ca.[50]

To THOMAS FREEMAN

September 22, 1785.

Sir: If Mr. Jonathan Johnson will give one hundred Dollars per ann: for my tract at the Great Meadows, he may have a Lease therefor, for the term of ten years without any other conditions annexed than those of reclaiming the Meadow and putting the whole under a good fence; leaving it to himself

[50] This text is a combination of that found in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers* and one printed in a sales catalogue of 1891, the catalogue being followed where it is, obviously, closer to Washington's original.

to place such buildings on the *premises* as his own inclination may prompt him to. Or, if he will build a dwelling House 36 feet by 24, with three rooms below and four above, with two stone chimneys, and fire places in each room, the House to be of hewed Logs or framed work, with glass windows. A Kitchen 16 by 20 feet, of the same kind of work with one stone chimney; and a Stable sufficient to contain twelve horses conveniently, I will allow him two years of the ten, exempt from rent. I am, etc.[51]

To CAPTAIN DE GENEVY DE PUSIGNAN[52]

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: It is not fourteen days since I was honored with your letter of the 16th. of last Octr. to what cause the delay is to be ascribed I am unable to inform you; but lest this answer with the inclosure should meet with any accident, I dispatch it under cover to the Count de Rochambeau at Paris.

I am sorry Sir, it is not in my power to comply with your wishes in regard to the Order of the Cincinnati. The institution itself points out the different grades of Officers who are to be admitted into this Society; and at its last General Meeting, the members thereof in France, of which the Counts de Rochambeau and de Estaing were placed at the head; one in the Military, the other in the Naval Line, were empowered to hold meetings and to decide upon the Claims of Officers belonging to either department in that Country.

It is there Sir, your pretensions must be offered; and if they are not precluded by the determination of your Sovereign, will I doubt not, meet with the liberal and favourable interpretation to which your merit entitled you. I have the honor to be, etc.[51]

[51] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[52] Capt. Alexandre Cesar de Genevy de Pusignan. He had been lieutenant en second, Regiment D'Auxonne, French allied troops.

To J. L. LE BARBIER, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: I have been honored with the receipt of your letter dated at Paris the 4th. of March; and pray you to accept my thanks for those copies of your Dramatic performance[53] which you had the goodness to send me, and in which you have made such honorable and flattering mention of my name.

I lament Sir, that my merits are not equal to your praises, and regret exceedingly that my deficiency in the knowledge of the French language does not allow me to become master of the Drama, and of those sentiments which I am told are beautifully expressed in it by the author. Upon my gratitude you have a large claim for those expressions of esteem with which your letter is replete, and which, from a Gentleman who professes not to compliment, are the more to be valued. I have the honor, etc.[54]

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Amid the public gratulations on your safe return to America, after a long absence and the many eminent services you have rendered it, for which as a benefited person I feel the obligation, permit an individual to join the public voice in expressing a sense of them; and to assure you, that, as no one entertains more respect for your character, so none can salute you with more sincerity, or with greater pleasure, than I do on the occasion. With the highest regard and greatest consideration, I am, &c.[54]

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[53] See Washington's letter to the President of Congress, Aug. 22, 1785, *ante*.

[54] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To BARBÉ MARBOIS

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 14th. from New York. At the moment I congratulate you on your late appointment,[55] and this fresh instance of his most Christian Majesty's attention to your merits, I cannot but express my sorrow that you are so near the eve of your departure from America.

I shall remember with pleasure Sir, the friendship you have always expressed for me; and with gratitude shall recollect the many instances of your partiallity and attention towards me. I should receive with great satisfaction the accot. of your safe arrival at Hispaniola and of every other event which can be interesting and pleasing to you; being with much truth, and great esteem and regard Sir Yr. etc.[56]

*To OTHO HOLLAND WILLIAMS

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 15th. of Augt. from Bath, only got to my hands on Sunday last. The one alluded to, of April, as giving an acct. of the miscarriage of the Diplomas,[57] and the best information you could obtain respecting them, nor any other since that which accompanied the Parchments, and wch. received an immediate acknowledgement, have reached me at all.

In a word, I never had the least intimation, or knowledge of the accident until Major Jacksons[58] Letter (copy of which I sent you) was delivered to me.

[55] Intendant for Hispaniola.
[56] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[57] Of the Cincinnati.
[58] William Jackson.

I have since enquired of Colo. Fitzgerald if he could recollect in whose care they were placed; his memory he says does not serve him on this occasion, but he is sure they were entrusted to safe hands, or such as appeared to him at the time to be so. It is a little extraordinary therefore that this person, whoever he may be, should not have given notice of the loss either to him, from whom the parcel was received, or to you to whom it was intended.

It is to be feared, under these circumstances, that neither the Diploma's, or the money advanced for them, will ever be recovered. however, if you conceive that an Advertisement will effect any valuable purpose, or be satisfactory to the Gentlemen for whose benefit they were designed, you can, as Secretary, recite the event and request information from any who may have it in their power to give it. With great esteem etc.

[H.S.P.]

To VICOMTE D'ARROT[59]

Mount Vernon, September 25, 1785.

Sir: Your kind remembrance of me in a letter of the 15th. of July from the Island of Tobago, does me much honor; at the sametime that the knowledge of your appointment as Governor of that place, and your good health, gave me much pleasure. I pray you to be assured that nothing which comes from Colo. D'Arrot can be considered as a trouble, and that to hear, at his moments of leisure, that you are in the enjoyment of perfect health, and the smiles of your Sovereign will always be pleasing; as I recollect with gratitude those instances of Mention with which you have honored me, and the circumstances that brought us acquainted.

[59] Rene Marie, Vicomte D'Arrot, Major General and Governor of the Island of Tobago.

In the enjoyment of ease and tranquillity, which your sword has contributed to procure, I am now seated under my own Vine and my own Fig-tree in the occupations of rural life, at the Seat which you once honored with your presence, and where I should be happy to meet you again.

At present we have no news that could afford you any entertainment: these States are in the full enjoyment of peace, and nothing, it is to be hoped will disturb the quiet of them. Tho' there is something misterious and not easy to reconcile with the spirit of the treaty, in the British still continuing their Garrisons at the posts of Niagara, Detroit &c. which are on the American side of the territorial line, notwithstanding a demand has been made of them.

Mrs. Washington, who remembers with pleasure your calling here with some Officers of your Legion, thanks you for your attention, and prays you to accept her compliments. With sentiments of great esteem etc.[60]

To JEAN ANTOINE HOUDON

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Sir: By a letter[61] which I have lately had the honor to receive from Dr. Franklin at Philada., I am informed of your arrival at that place; many letters from very respectable characters in France, as well as the Doctors, inform me of the occasion, for which, tho' the cause is not of my seeking, I feel the most agreeable and grateful sensations. I wish the object of your mission had been more worthy of the masterly strokes of the first Statuary in Europe; for thus you are represented to me.

[60] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[61] On September 26 Washington wrote briefly to William Temple Franklin, acknowledging his letter of Sept. 20, 1785. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

It will give me pleasure Sir, to welcome you to this seat of my retirement: and whatever I have, or can procure that is necessary to your purposes, or convenient and agreeable to your wishes; you must freely command, as inclination to oblige you, shall be not found deficient, either on your arrival, or during your stay.

With sentiments of esteem, etc.[62]

*To THOMAS JEFFERSON

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favors of the 10th. and 17th. of July which were committed to the care of Mr. Houdon; but I have not yet had the pleasure to see that Gentleman. His Instruments and materials (Doctr Franklin informs me) not being arrived at Havre when they Sailed he was obliged to leave them; and is now employed in providing others at Philadelphia, with which he will proceed to this place as soon as they are ready. I shall take great pleasure in shewing Mr. Houdon every civility, and attention in my power during his stay in this Country, as I feel myself under personal obligations to you and Doctr. Franklin (as the State of Virginia have done me the honor to direct a Statue to be erected to my Memory) for havg. entrusted the execution of it to so eminent an Artist, and so worthy a character. I have the pleasure to inform you, that the subscriptions to the inland Navigations of the Rivers Potomack and James require no aid from Foreigners. the product of the first when the Books were exhibited at the General Meeting in May last, amounted to £40,300. Sterling, and is since nearly compleated to the full Sum required by Law. That of the latter, at the General Meeting in August, were superabundant. The

[62] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

work of the former began the first of August, and is progressing very well, the latter I am persuaded will do *more* than keep pace with it, as the difficulties are much less.

I have the further pleasure to inform you (and I should have done it long since, had I not supposed that your information would have been more full and perfect from some of your friends in the Assembly) that a resolution authorizing the Executive to appoint Commissioners to explore, and report the best communication between the Waters of Elizabeth River and those of Albermarle passed last Session. That the Commrs. have proceeded to the Survey, and have reported in favor of that which will pass through Drummonds pond to the Pasquetank; but what will be the result I am unable to inform you, as I find by some of the principal characters of No. Carolina (Members of Congress) who have called here, that jealousies prevail, and a powerful opposition will be given to any Water Communication between the two States, lest Virginia should derive the benefits arising from their Exports &ca.

I am very happy to find that your sentiments respecting the interest the Assembly was pleased to give me in the two navigations of the Potomack and James Rivers, coincide so well with my own. I never, for a moment, entertained an idea of accepting; the difficulty which laboured in my mind was how to refuse without giving offence. Ultimately I have it in contemplation to apply the profits arising from the Tolls to some public use. In this, if I knew how, I would meet the wishes of the Assembly; but if I am not able to get at these, my own inclination leads me to apply them to the establishment of two charity Schools, one on each river, for the Education and support of poor Children; especially the descendants of those who have fallen in defence of their Country.

I can say nothing decisely [*sic*] respecting the Western Settlement of this State. The Inhabitants of Kentucke have held

several Conventions, and have resolved to apply for a Seperation. But what may be the final issue of it, is not for me, at this time, to inform you. Opinions, as far as they have come to my knowledge, are diverse. I have uniformly given it as mine, to meet them upon their own ground, draw the best line, and best terms we can of seperation and part good friends. After the next Session of our Assembly more may be discovered, and communicated, and if you should not receive it through a better channel, I will have the honor to inform you.

I am sorry I cannot give you full information respecting Captn. Bushnals projects for the destruction of Shipping. No interesting experiment having been made, and my memory being treacherous, I may, in some measure, be mistaken in what I am about to relate. Bushnel is a man of great Mechanical powers, fertile of invention, and master in execution. He came to me in 1776 recommended by Governor Trumbull (now dead) and other respectable characters who were proselites to his plan. Although I wanted faith myself, I furnished him with money, and other aids to carry it into execution. He laboured for sometime ineffectually, and though the advocates for his scheme continued sanguine he never did succeed. One accident or another always intervening. I then thought, and still think, that it was an effort of genius; but that a combination of too many things were requisite, to expect much success from the enterprise against an enemy, who are always upon guard.

That he had a Machine so contrived as to carry a man under water at any depth he chose, and for a considerable time and distance, with an apparatus charged with Powder which he could fasten to a Ships bottom or side and give fire to in a given time (Sufft. for him to retire) by means whereof a ship could be blown up, or sunk, are facts which I believe admit of little doubt; but then, where it was to operate against an enemy, it is

no easy matter to get a person hardy enough to encounter the variety of dangers to which he must be exposed. 1 from the novelty 2 from the difficulty of conducting the machine, and governing it under water on Acct. of the Currents &ca. 3 the consequent uncertainty of hitting the object of destination, without rising frequently above water for fresh observation, wch., when near the Vessel, would expose the Adventurer to a discovery, and to almost to certain death. To these causes I always ascribed the non-performance of his plan, as he wanted nothing that I could furnish, to secure the success of it. This to the best of my recollection is a true state of the case. But Humphreys, if I mistake not, being one of the proselites, will be able to give you a more perfect Acct. of it than I have done. With the most perfect esteem etc.[63]

To RICHARD VARICK

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Taylor[64] brought me your favor of the 28th. ulto., and I have received your other letter of the 2d. of December; for both I thank you, as also for the proceedings of the Mayors Court in the case of Rutgars and Waddington which was enclosed in the latter. I have read this with attention; and tho' I pretend not to be a competent judge of the Law of Nations, or of the act of your Assembly, nor of the spirit of the confederation in their niceties; yet it should seem to me that the interpretation of them by the Court, is founded in reason and common sense; which is, or ought to be the foundation of all Law and Government.

I am sorry to hear of your long indisposition and repeated attacks; it may be well to nurse a little. Disorders oftentimes,

[63] From the original in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[64] George Taylor, jr.

are easier prevented than cured, and while you are in the way to re-establish your health, (on which I congratulate you) it is better to use preventatives, than alteratives &c. &c. with which the Apothecaries Shops are replete.

As you are at the source of foreign intelligence, I could only reverberate what you have before heard; and having nothing of a Domestic kind worth communicating, I shall be rather laconic in my perfect address. I enjoy, thank God, very good health, but Mrs. W——n, is scarce ever well, she joins me in best wishes for you, and I am, etc.[65]

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: I had just written, and was about to put into the hands of Mr. Taylor,[66] (a gentleman in the department of the secretary of foreign affairs) the enclosed letter, when I had the honor to receive by post your favor of the 20th instant. I have a grateful sense of the partiality of the French nation towards me, and feel very sensibly the indulgent expression of your letter, which does me great honor.

When it suits M. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavour to render his stay as agreeable as I can. It would give me infinite pleasure to see you. At this place I dare not look for it; though to entertain you under my own roof would be doubly gratifying. When or whether I shall ever have the satisfaction of seeing you at Philadelphia is uncertain, as retirement from the public walks of life has not been so productive of leisure and ease as might have been expected. With very great esteem, etc.[65]

[65] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[66] George Taylor.

To THE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mount Vernon, September 27, 1785.

Dear Sir: Mr. Taylor presented me the honor of your favor of the 25th. ulto., and gave me the pleasure of hearing that Mrs. Jay, yourself and family were well when he left New York. Upon your safe return to your native Country, after the long absence, and important services you have rendered it in many interesting negotiations, I very sincerely congratulate you and your Lady. It gave me great pleasure to hear of your late appointment as Secretary of Foreign Affairs: a happier choice in my opinion, could not have been made; and I shall always rejoice at any circumstance which can contribute either to your honor, interest or convenience.

Having compleated his mission, Mr. Taylor returns to you with the proceedings, and report of the Commissioners who were sent into New York to inspect the embarkations; which by the by, was little more than a farce, as they inspected no more property than the British chose they should be witness to the embarkation of. It will always give me pleasure to hear from you. Mrs. Washington joins me in most respectful compliments to, and best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Jay, and I am, etc.[67]

*To JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Mount Vernon, October 1, 1785.

My dear Sir: It has so happened, that your letter of the first of last month did not reach me until Saturdays Post. You know, too well, the sincere respect and regard I entertained for

[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

your venerable fathers public and private character, to require assurances of the concern I felt for his death; or of that sympathy in your feelings for the loss of him, which is prompted by friendship. Under this loss however, great as your pangs may have been at the first shock, you have every thing to console you. A long and well spent life in the Service of his Country, placed Govr. Trumbull amongst the first of Patriots. In the social duties he yielded to none. and his Lamp, from the common course of Nature, being nearly extinguished, worn down with age and cares, but retaining his mental faculties in perfection, are blessings which rarely attend advanced life. All these combining, have secured to his memory universal respect and love here, and no doubt immeasurable happiness hereafter.

I am sensible that none of these observations can have escaped you, and that I can offer nothing which your own reason has not already suggested on this occasion; and being of Sterne's opinion, that "Before an affliction is digested, consolation comes too soon; and after it is digested, it comes too late: there is but a mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at." I rarely attempt it, nor shall I add more on this subject to you, as it would only be a renewal of sorrow, by recalling a fresh to your remembrance things which had better be forgotten.

My principal pursuits are of a rural nature, in which I have great delight, especially as I am blessed with the enjoyment of good health. Mrs. Washington on the contrary is hardly ever well, but thankful for your kind remembrance of her, and joins me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Trumbull and your family. Be assured that with sentiments of the purest, esteem etc.[68]

[68] From a photostat of the original in the *Washington Papers.*

To GEORGE MASON

Mount Vernon, October 3, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have this moment received yours of yesterday's date, enclosing a memorial and remonstrance against the Assessment Bill,[69] which I will read with attention. At *present* I am unable to do it, on account of company. The bill itself I do not recollect ever to have read: with *attention* I am certain I never did, but will compare them together.

Altho, no man's sentiments are more opposed to *any kind* of restraint upon religious principles than mine are; yet I must confess, that I am not amongst the number of those who are so much alarmed at the thoughts of making people pay towards the support of that which they profess, if of the denomination of Christians; or declare themselves Jews, Mahomitans or otherwise, and thereby obtain proper relief. As the matter now stands, I wish an assessment had never been agitated, and as it has gone so far, that the Bill could die an easy death; because I think it will be productive of more quiet to the State, than by enacting it into a Law; which, in my opinion, would be impolitic, admitting there is a decided majority for it, to the disquiet of a respectable minority. In the first case the matter will soon subside; in the latter, it will rankle and perhaps convulse, the State. The Dinner Bell rings, and I must conclude with an expression of my concern for your indisposition. Sincerely and affectionately, I am &c.[70]

[69] The bill in question was to provide for teachers of the Christian religion in Virginia by means of a specified tax, the money to be paid out on order of the vestries, elders, etc., of each religious society to a teacher or minister of its denomination. It could also be used to provide places of worship. Mason had printed the remonstrance against the bill and sent it to Washington, asking him to sign it. Mason's letter (October 2) is in the *Washington Papers*, but the remonstrance is not now found therein.

[70] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JOHN PAGE

Mount Vernon, October 3, 1785.

My Dear Sir: The last Post from Richmd. gave me the pleasure of your favor of the 9th. from Rosewell. Expressions of friendship from good men, and the congratulations of those who are not addicted to unmeaning compliments, cannot fail to be acceptable. In this light I view and thank you for the obliging and endulgent sentiments of your letter, which have affected my mind with gratitude and pleasure.

It will be unnecessary I hope Sir, to assure you of the pleasure I shou'd have felt at seeing you and Mrs. Page at Mount Vernon on your way to Philada., if you could have made it convenient and agreeable to have taken this rout, at all times I should be happy to see you here.

Soon after I returned from Richmond in May last, I spoke to a Dutch Merchant in Alexandria on the subject of importing Germans; but not receiving any satisfactory information from him, tho' he was perfectly willing to oblige, I requested him, as he was on the eve of a journey thro' Baltimore to Boston, at both which Dutch Houses are established, and in the last he is concerned, to make every enquiry he could respecting the mode, the terms, and practicability of obtaining the number we want: but meeting with no precise information here neither, I wrote some little time ago to Mr. De Neufville, a Gentleman of very respectable character at Amsterdam, with whom I have long corresponded, for full information; and to know also, if £5000 could be borrowed for the use of the Company on such terms, and upon such securities as it proposed to give. Herein also I have been unlucky; for soon after I had written and had sent my Letter to New York to obtain a passage by the Packet, I received an account of this Gentlemans arrival at Boston. These

delays following the enquiries, which I only considered as auxiliary to those of the Managers,[71] to whom I intended to communicate the result, will be unlucky if they have taken no steps in the meanwhile themselves. Would it not be advisable in case My good Sir, for you as one of them to go fully into the matter whilst you are at Philadelphia, where, it is to be presumed the best information on this side the Atlantic is to be obtained; and the most likely place to enter into Contracts, unless a person in behalf of the Company, should be sent to Holland expressly for this purpose; or a gentleman there in whom confidence could be placed, would undertake it. But unless Mr. Anderson should succeed in negotiating the loan he was requested to obtain, or the like sum could be borrowed in Holland, we shall be without funds to carry the Plan into effect, and consequently cannot advance beyond the limits of enquiry, or preliminary agreement.

Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to Mrs. Page, who we hope will reap all the benefits which are expected from the change of climate. With very great esteem etc.[72]

To LUCRETIA WILHEMINA VAN WINTER

Mount Vernon, October 5, 1785.

Madam: It gives me pain to find that the letter which I had the honor of writing to you on the 30th. of March last, in acknowledgement of the Poem you had the goodness to send me thro' the hands of Mr. Vogels, should never have reached you. I now enclose a copy of it, presuming that the original must have miscarried; occasioned by addressing it to that

[71] Of the Potomac Navigation Co.

[72] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On October 3 Washington wrote a brief letter of acknowledgment to Charles William Frederick Dumas, at the Hague. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

Gentleman at Philadelphia, when possibly he might not have been in this Country.

I have now to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging letter of the 10th. of April, with the Duplicate of the above Poem, for which I thank you, and can only repeat to you my wish, that the subject of it was more deserving of your lays. I pray you to have the goodness to offer my compliments to Mr. Van Winter, and to be assured of the respect and esteem with which, I am, etc.[73]

To CHARLES ARMAND-TUFFIN[74]

Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Your Letter of the 19th. of May was brought to this place by Mr. Houdon, who arrived here the 3d. of this month. I delay no time to acknowledge the receipt of it, and to thank you for the several communications you have had the goodness to make me.

You are too well acquainted with my wishes for every thing which can promote your interest, honor, or happiness, to suppose that I did not rejoice at the prospect of your being appointed to the command of a Corps; which is agreeable to your own inclination, and which suits your talents: every thing which gratify's the first, and favors the latter, I sincerely wish you may enjoy.

At present everything in America is tranquil, and I hope will long remain so. It is not our interest to seek new broils, and I hope our neighbours will not commence them. It is not a little misterious however, that the Western Posts, on the American side the territorial line, should still be possessed by British Garrisons: the mistery, it is to be presumed, will now soon be

[73] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The text varies slightly from that printed in the *Journal of American History*, 1930.

[74] Marquis de La Rouerie.

explained; as an American Minister has been received at the Court of London.

I never expect to draw my sword again: I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it; but if, contrary to all expectation, such an event should take place, I should think it a fortunate circumstance, and myself highly honored, to have it supported by yours. My time is now occupied by rural amusements, in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is, altho' it is against the profession of arms and would clip the wings of some of you young soldiers who are soaring after glory, to see the whole world in peace, and the Inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind.

Mrs. Washington, thankful for your kind remembrance of her, desires me to present her compliments to you. It is unnecessary to assure you of the high esteem etc.[75]

To JAMES WARREN

Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785.

Dear Sir: The assurances of your friendship, after a silence of more than six years, are extremely pleasing to me. Friendships, formed under the circumstances that ours commenced, are not easily eradicated; and I can assure you, that mine has undergone no diminution; every occasion, therefore, of renewing it, will give me pleasure, and I shall be happy at all times to hear of your welfare.

The war, as you have very justly observed, has terminated most advantageously for America, and a fair field is presented to our view; but I confess to you freely, My Dr. Sir, that I do not think we possess wisdom or Justice enough to cultivate it

[75] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

properly. Illiberality, Jealousy, and local policy mix too much in all our public councils for the good government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance; and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to. To *me*, it is a solecism in politics: indeed it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a Nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation, who are the creatures of our making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action, and recallable at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing, sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of Government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness.

That we have it in our power to become one of the most respectable Nations upon Earth, admits, in my humble opinion, of no doubt; if we would but pursue a wise, just, and liberal policy towards one another, and would keep good faith with the rest of the World: that our resources are ample and encreasing, none can deny; but while they are grudgingly applyed, or not applyed at all, we give a vital stab to public faith, and shall sink, in the eyes of Europe, into contempt.

It has long been a speculative question among Philosophers and wise men, whether foreign Commerce is of real advantage to any Country; that is, whether the luxury, effeminacy, and corruptions which are introduced along with it; are counterbalanced by the convenience and wealth which it brings with it; but the decision of this question is of very little importance to us: we have abundant reason to be convinced, that the spirit

for Trade which pervades these States is not to be restrained; it behooves us then to establish just principles; and this, any more than other matters of national concern, cannot be done by thirteen heads differently constructed and organized. The necessity, therefore, of a controuling power is obvious; and why it should be withheld is beyond my comprehension.

The Agricultural Society, lately established in Philadelphia, promises extension usefulness if it is prosecuted with spirit. I wish most sincerely that every State in the Union would institute similar ones; and that these Societies would correspond fully and freely with each other, and communicate all useful discoveries founded on practice, with a due attention to climate, soil, and Seasons to the public.

The great works of improving and extending the inland navigations of the two large rivers Potomac and James, which interlock with the waters of the Western Territory, are already begun, and I have little doubt of their success. The consequences to the Union, in my judgment are immense: more so in a political, than in a commercial view; for unless we can connect the new States which are rising to our view in those regions, with those on the Atlantic by *interest*, (the only binding cement, and no otherwise to be effected but by opening such communications as will make it easier and cheaper for them to bring the product of their labour to our markets, instead of going to the Spaniards southerly, or the British northerly), they will be quite a distinct people; and ultimately may be very troublesome neighbours to us. In themselves considered merely as a hardy race, this *may* happen; how much more so, if linked with either of those powers in politics and commerce.

It would afford me great pleasure to go over those grounds in your State with a mind more at ease, than when I travelled them in 1775 and 1776; and to unite in congratulating on the

happy change, with those characters, who participated of [*sic*] the anxious moments we passed in those days, and for whom I entertain a sincere regard; but I do not know whether to flatter myself with the enjoyment of it: the deranged state of my affairs, from an absence and total neglect of them for almost nine years, and a pressure of other matters, allow me little leisure for gratifications of this sort. Mrs. Washington offers her compliments and best wishes to Mrs. Warren, to which be pleased to add those of, dear Sir, &c.[76]

To THOMAS AND MRS. BLACKBURN

Monday, October 10, 1785.

Genl. and Mrs. Washington present their compliments to Colo. and Mrs. Blackburne; are much obliged to them for their kind invitation to the Wedding[77] on Thursday. They would attend with pleasure, but for the indisposition of the latter; and the particular engagements of the former which confine him at home this week, and oblige him to attend the Board of Directors at Georgetown, the Great Falls, &c. the beginning of next.

The Genl. and Mrs. Washington will always be happy to see the young couple at Mount Vernon.[76]

To THOMAS FREEMAN

Mount Vernon, October 16, 1785.

Sir: It is sometime since I wrote in very great haste an answer, or rather an acknowledgement of your letter of the 9th. of June. I will now by Mr. Craig,[78] endeavour to be more explicit than I was, or could be at that time.

[76] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[77] Of Bushrod Washington and Julia Ann Blackburn.
[78] William Craik (Craig).

With regard to my Lands on the Ohio and Great Kanhawa, I am not yet inclined to relax from the terms of my printed Advertisement, with a copy of which I furnished you: When I see cause to do it, you shall be duly advertised of the change: in the meantime, if you could discover the *most* advantageous terms which could be obtained, and would advise me thereof, I should be obliged to you. As to the Great Meadow tract, you may rent it on the best terms you can, not exceeding ten years from the first day of January next.

My sentiments with respect to the Mill were so fully given to you in my last (by Dr. Knight)[79] that it is unnecessary to add aught on that score now. It has cost me too much already (without any return) to undergo a repetition of the like expence. If you cannot rent or sell her as there directed, let her return to dust, the first loss may be best.

I informed you in my last, and I presume you were convinced of it before, that I made no agreement with the Tenants on the tract near you, which could exonerate them from paying the rents which were *then* due; consequently they must be made to pay them; otherwise the most deserving of favor (by having paid) are on a worse footing, than the least deserving who ought to have paid before I went into the country and explained the terms on which I had directed them to be let.

With respect to Mr. Simpsons quitting the Tenement, I observed to you in my last; that when I *make* a bargain I consider it, to all intents and purposes, as binding on me; consequently that it is so on the person with whom it is made. He may well remember, that upon his expressing an idea that he would try the place one year on the rent it now goes at, I told him *explicitly* he must take it for the period on which it was offered, or not at all; as I did not intend to go thro' the same trouble every year

[79] Dr. John(?) Knight.

by making an annual bargain for it; and that he acquiesed thereto. It behooves him therefore, and the Tenant likewise, to consider what they are about, as one or the other will be liable to me for the rent, agreeably to the tenure of the Lease. I informed you in my last what had been done with the accounts which were put into my hands by him and Mr. John Jones, and requested him to assign the certificate which I then enclosed, and to return it to me; but have heard nothing from him since on the subject, which is a little surprizing.

I hope the Hay, Corn and other articles have been sold 'ere this, and that you have received the Cash for them, or good security for the payment of the amount of them.

If Mr. Simpson, contrary to his agreement and good faith, should have moved off my Land; I am at a loss to decide what had best be done with my negroes. It was in consideration of his taking the Plantation, that I agreed to let him have the negroes so cheap: If he is gone, or going from it, he shall hold them no longer on the same terms he has them this year: but my wish would be that you could send them to me at this place, if the measure can be reconciled to them. Simon's countrymen, and Nancy's relations are all here, and would be glad to see them; I would make a Carpenter of Simon, to work along with his shipmate Sambo. At any rate I will not suffer them to go down the river, or to any distance where you cannot have an eye over them.

What Capt: Crawford did upon my Land on Shirtee in order to save it, must undoubtedly be well known to those who were most intimately connected with him and his movements at that period. Mr. Chas. Morgan is as likely to possess this knowledge as any other; but certainly there must be more, and it may be essential to find them out and to call upon them as evidences in the cause.

In a former Letter I informed you that I had obtained a Patent for the round Bottom; and that it might be rented on the same terms with my other Lands on the Ohio and Great Kanhawa; and I repeat it in this, lest a miscarriage should have happened.

When I was out last fall, I left all my Baggage at Mr. Simpson's, viz, Tents, Bedding and many other things; of which I hope proper care have and will be taken, if he has, or is about to leave the place. Among other Articles there were two eight gallon Kegs of West India rum, one of them of the first quality. As this is a commodity which is subject to a variety of accidents and misfortunes, I request it may be sold: I will take my chance to procure more when I may come into that Country; which, at present, is uncertain. If the Tents and bedding should get wet, and are not dryed, they will be ruined; and therefore pray that particular attention may be paid to them, my Canteens, travelling Trunk &c. &c.

If you have received and paid anything on my account since I was out; it may be well to render a statement of it by Mr. Craig, who will offer a safe and good opportunity to remit what cash may be in your hands consequent of the sales of last fall or by other means, after you have deducted your commissions. If the Bonds which were taken at that time are not paid agreeably to the terms of them, delay no time to recover the money as soon as you can; as I am not inclined to be put off with unmeaning promises, and obliged to sue at last.

If my negroes are to come down, the sooner it could happen the better for the young ones: and a careful person should be hired to take care of them. In this case I would wish to have my Baggage (except the Liquor) sent to me at the same time, one trouble and expence would serve both purposes, I am, etc.[80]

[80] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ARTHUR DONALDSON

Mount Vernon, October 16, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the first inst. did not reach my hands until last night, or I would have replied to it sooner.

I am much obliged to you for the Model of your Hippopotamus, and the information which accompanied it, I have a high expectation of its answering very valuable purposes, if the mud, in the beds of our Rivers, is of that fertilizing nature which the appearance indicate; of which I mean to make a full experiment upon a small scale this fall, having the command of a flat bottom Boat, a scow, with which I can get out as much as will try the effect of different quantities upon small squares of exhausted Land, in all points similar, If the quantity of mud which shall be found necessary from this essay to dress land properly, when added to the expense of the Machine for raising it, bringing it to the Land, cartage, &c &c does not come too high, I should certainly adopt the measure next year, and will then avail myself of the kind offer you have made me, In the mean while, I pray you to accept my thanks for your politeness in this instance.[81]

CERTIFICATE TO JOHN FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon in Virginia, October 26, 1785.

The bearer Mr John Fairfax is sent by the subscriber to Boston for a Jack Ass; of the arrival of which at that place he is

[81] The text is from that printed in a sales catalogue in 1891.

On October 21, at Alexandria, Va., Washington wrote the following certificate for former Lieut. Thomas Pool, of the Second Continental Dragoons, to Pool's petition to the Continental Congress, Sept. 29, 1785: "The above certificate of Colo. Hamilton, contains all and precisely what I know and believe respecting the allegations of Mr. Pool. With respect to the Sum, or Sums which he may have received from me, I am unable at this time and place to certify with any degree of certainty, but *believe* as he was early confined to the Provost at New York that it did not exceed ten or twelve Guineas." The petition, with Hamilton's and Washington's certificates, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress,* no. 42, vol. 6, fols. 318–328.

advised; and where a second is also expected on his account from Spain. With both of these if the second is arrived, and their dispatch as the nature as the case may admit. But as sickness, accident or other unadvoidable delay may impede the journey and cause him to require aid to prosecute, the subscriber would esteem it as a favor done him by any who shall render it; and will thankfully repay any advance or expence which may be incurred.[82]

To JOHN FAIRFAX[83]

Mount Vernon, October 26, 1785.

You will proceed in the Stage from Alexandria to Boston, without losing a day that can possibly be avoided; and when arrived at the latter place, deliver the Letter herewith given you to the Honr. Thos. Cushing, Lieut: Governor of the State of Massachusetts, who resides in the town of Boston, and whose directions you are to follow.

The intention of your going thither is, to bring one, perhaps two Jack asses, which have been imported for me from Spain: a Spaniard[84] is arrived with, and attends the first; and probably if the second is arrived,[85] there will be one with him also: one, or both of these men, according to the instructions they may have received in Spain, or agreeably to the directions you may receive from the Lieut: Governor, are to come on with you and the Jacks.

[82] From a copy kindly furnished by Roy B. Cook, of Charleston, W. Va. It was addressed to Tench Tilghman, Robert Morris, at Philadelphia; Elias Boudinot, at Elizabeth Town; Governor Clinton or Henry Knox, at New York; and Jeremiah Wadsworth, at Hartford.

[83] An overseer at Mount Vernon.

[84] Pedro Tellez.

[85] In the *Washington Papers,* under date of Aug. 8, 1785, is the invoice of the shipment of one jackass, 44 Spanish inches high, in the *Ranger,* Job Knight, master, from Bilboa to Gloucester [Massachusetts].

As you will have to ride back, and as this will be the case also with the Spaniards, (if there are more than one), Horses, if it is thought improper to ride on the Jacks, will be to be bought, and as females will answer my purposes best, I desire you to buy mares: let them be young, sound and of good size, as I propose to put them to the Jacks in the season for covering: Lieut: Govr. Cushing will furnish you with money, and aid you with his advice in this purchase; as also to defray your expenses in returning.

You know too well the high value I set upon these Jacks, to neglect them on the road in any instance whatsoever; but if the one which is now at Boston, and the other if it arrives in time, should come on under their proper keepers, your business will then be to see that every thing necessary is provided, leaving the management of them to the Spaniard or Spaniards who will attend them, and who best know how to travel and feed them. See however (if their keepers are drunken and neglectful) that due attention and care are bestowed on these animals.

As I do not mean to be at the expence of hiring and bringing on an Interpreter (altho' neither of the Spaniards should speak English) you would do well before you leave Boston, where by means of one you can communicate your sentiments to each other, to settle all the necessary points for your journey: that is, your hour for setting out in the morning, which let be early; taking up in the evening, number of feeds in the day, and of what kind of food: also the kind and quantity of Liquor that is to be given to the Spaniards in a day. In this govern yourself by the advice of the Lieut: Governor. I would not debar them of what is proper; any more than I would endulge them in what is not so. Be attentive to the conduct of these men, as from their good or bad dispositions I shall be enabled to judge

whether to keep one of them or not; if either shou'd incline to stay in the Country with the Jacks. Having settled the principal points with them before you leave Boston, you will easily understand each other in smaller matters by signs, 'till you return to New York; where by means of the Spanish Minister's attendants, you may if necessary, settle a fresh plan.

Not expecting that you will travel back faster than the Jacks can walk, it is possible you may reach New York before you take a halting day; which, if not *too* far, would be best, as here probably the Spaniards will require it, on account of meeting their Countrymen in the family of Mr. Gardoqui, the Spanish Minister: however, if they think a halt sooner is necessary, you must be governed by their opinions, as the Jacks must not be hurt by travelling them too fast, or improperly.

Let the Jacks be put separate and with no other creatures, lest they should get kicked, and hurt themselves or hurt others; and if it is necessary they should be cloathed, (which you must know before you leave Boston) provide Blankets or such other cloathing as their keepers think best, at that place.

Keep an exact account of your expences from the time you leave home until you return to it again; remembering that Dollars in the States of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and part of New Jersey, pass at 7/6.; bordering on New York, and in that State for 8/., and in all the New England Governments at 6/. as in Virginia, all other silver, and gold, in that proportion.

Altho' I do not think there is any probability of the Jack, or Jacks having left Boston before you will arrive there; yet at, and after you leave the City of New York, it may be well to enquire now and then along the road, whether this may not have taken place; the circumstance of which will be very notorious if it has happened. For this reason, if there is a Stage which passes

thro' Hartford in Connecticut, and so along the post road to Boston; it will be better to pursue this rout than to go by the Stage-boat from New York to Providence.

As soon as the Stage gets to its Quarters at night, immediately engage your passage for the next day, lest you may be too late and thereby detained a day or two for its return. Make use of the State *Waggons,* the Stage Coaches are too expensive.

As soon as you get to Boston, write to me, or get somebody to do it, by the Post, informing me whether there are one, or two Jacks; in what condition they are, with other particulars, and when you expect to commence your journey back.[86]

To LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR THOMAS CUSHING

Mount Vernon, October 26, 1785.

Dear Sir: The last Post gave me the honor of your favor of the 7th. inst: for which and your care of the Jack and his Keeper, I pray you to accept my grateful thanks.

As the Jack is now safely landed, and as I am unwilling to hazard him again at Sea, I have sent a man in whom I can confide, to conduct him and the Spandiard to this place by Land. The person I send has not the smallest knowledge of the Spanish language, consequently there can be little communication between him and the Spaniard on the road; but if there is a convention established, by means of an Interpreter at Boston, and essentials well understood by the parties before they commence their journey; there will not be such an occasion for an Interpreter on the road, as to be a counterprize for the expence, as Mr. Fairfax whom I send will be both guide and paymaster, leaving nothing for the Spaniard to do but to be

[86] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.* The original was said to be in the possession (1930) of Dr. P. T. B. Shaffer, of Elizabeth, Pa.

attentive to the animal. The hour for starting in the morning and putting up in the evening, and feeding in the meantime being fixed: the halting days, and kind of food for the Jack and manner of treating the Spaniard settled and clearly understood; will remove all difficulties of consequence on the road, at least 'till they get to New York, where by means of the Spanish Minister's attendants an explanation of them, if any their be, may enable the parties to pursue the rest of their journey with more ease.

As I expect two Jacks it would give me great pleasure if the second should have arrived; that one trouble and expence might serve both. Mr. Fairfax, the bearer of this, goes from hence to Boston in the Stage, and will have to buy a horse to return home upon. I prefered this method on account of the dispatch with which he would reach Boston, and because the whole journey might be too much for one horse taken from hence, to perform in a short time. If the Jack is led, two horses will be wanted, and if two Jacks are arrived, three may be necessary. These uncertainties, and the danger of trusting a large sum in specie to a man who has not been much accustom'd to the care of it, tho' perfectly honest, have induced me to request the favor of you to obtain from any of the Merchants in Boston who have dealings in, and who may want to make remittances to Alexandria, as much money as will make these purchases, and defray the expenses of the Men and Horses back to me; the Bill, for the amount of which, shall be paid at sight; as also the charges which Mr. Peace may have against me, the cost of getting him from Gloucester to you, and such other expences as may have arisen during their stay in Boston, in short the whole. Mr. Fairfax has directions with respect to the kind of horses I want, and will take your advice how to procure them

on the best terms, as well as in all other matters, for the favor of which I shall be much obliged to you. Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to Mrs. Cushing, your son and daughter; and with great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.[87]

*To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1785.

Dear Sir: Inclosed I give your Excellency the trouble of receiving an Official letter from me, which I beg the favor of you to lay before the General Assembly.

Your letter of enclosing the appointment of Colo. Neville, in the room of Majr. Massey, came duly to hand; and the latter was forwarded by a safe conveye.

I have never yet seen the report of the Commissioners for examining the best course for a cut between Elizabeth River and the Waters of No. Carolina. Your Excellency was so good as to offer me a copy of it, but the matter has either slipped your memory, or the letter which contained it has miscarried. With respectful compliments, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, to Mrs. Henry, and with very great esteem and regard, I have the honr. etc. [H.S.P.]

To JAMES MADISON

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: Receive my thanks for your obliging favor of the 20th., with its enclosure, of the latter I now avail myself in a letter to the Governor, for the General Assembly. Your delicate sensibility deserves my particular acknowledgements:

[87] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

both your requests are complied with, the first, by congeniality of sentiment; the second because I would fulfill your desire.

Conceiving it would be better to suggest a wish, than to propose an absolute condition of acceptance; I have so expressed myself to the Assembly, and shall be obliged to you, not only for information of the result, but (if there is an acquiescence on the part of the Country) for your sentiments respecting the appropriations; from what may be said upon the occasion, you will learn what would be most pleasing, and of the greatest utility to the public.

By Colo. Henry Lee I sent you the reports of the Secretary for foreign affairs on the Consular Department. I hope you have received them.

With every sentiment of esteem, etc.[88]

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, October 29, 1785.

Sir: Your Excellency having been pleased to transmit to me a copy of the Act[89] appropriating to my benefit certain shares in the companies for opening the navigation of James and Potomac rivers; I take the liberty of returning to the General Assembly, thro' your hands, the profound and grateful acknowledgments inspired by so signal a mark of their beneficent intentions towards me. I beg you Sir, to assure them, that I am filled on this occasion with every sentiment, which can flow from a heart warm with love for my Country, sensible to every token of its approbation and affection, and solicitous to testify in every instance a respectful submission to its wishes.

[88] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[89] The Assembly forthwith passed an act that the shares with the tolls and profits should stand appropriated to such objects of a public nature as Washington should so deed during his life or direct by his last will and testament. A certified copy of this act is in the *Washington Papers,* under date of Oct. 17, 1785.

With these sentiments in my bosom, I need not dwell on the anxiety I feel in being obliged in this instance to decline a favor which is rendered no less flattering by the manner in which it is conveyed, than it is affectionate in itself. In explaining this observation I pass over a comparison of my endeavors in the public service with the many honorable testimonies of approbation which have already so far over rated and over paid them; reciting one consideration only which supersedes the necessity of recurring to every other.

When I was first called to the station with which I was honored during the late conflict for our liberties, to the diffidence which I had so many reasons to feel in accepting it, I thought it my duty to join a firm resolution to shut my hand against every pecuniary recompense. To this resolution I have invariably adhered, and from it (if I had the inclination) I do not consider myself at liberty now to depart.

Whilst I repeat therefore my fervent acknowledgments to the legislature for their very kind sentiments and intentions in my favor, and at the same time beg them to be persuaded that a remembrance of this singular proof of their goodness towards me, will never cease to cherish returns of the warmest affection and gratitude, I must pray that their Act, so far as it has for its object my personal emolument, may not have its effect; but if it should please the General Assembly to permit me to turn the destination of the fund vested in me, from my private emolument, to objects of a public nature, it will be my study in selecting these to prove the sincerity of my gratitude for the honor conferred on me, by preferring such as may appear most subservient to the enlightened and patriotic views of the Legislature. With great respect etc.[90]

[90] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, October 30, 1785.

My dear Humphreys: Since my last of the 1st. of September I have received your favour of the 17th. of July, which was brought to this country by Mr. Houdon; to whom, tho I had no agency in the matter, I feel great obligations for quitting France, and the pressing calls of the Great Ones to make a bust of me from the life. I am not less indebted to the favourable opinion of those who you say are anxious to perpetuate my name, and to be acquainted with the memoirs of my life. So far as these are connected with the history of the revolution, and other public documents, they may easily be got at; all beyond these is, I conceive very unimportant. My letter of the 25th. of July which I presume you have received long 'ere this (but for fear of a miscarriage having a rough copy by me, I send you a duplicate) will have conveyed my sentiments so fully that I shall add nothing further on the subject at this time, than to assure you that I was then, and am still perfectly sincere in the proposal it contained.

I am very much obliged to you for the poem you sent me, I have read it with pleasure, and it is much admired by all those to whom I have showed it.

Nothing has happened since my last; nor is it probable any thing interesting will happen until the different Assemblies convene. Congress as usual, are proceeding very slowly in their business, and shameful as it is, are often at a stand for want of a sufficient representation. The States have been addressed by them on the subject, but what will be the effect I know not. To me there appears such lassitude in our public Councils as is truly Shocking; and must clog the wheels of Government;

which under such circumstances will either stop altogether, or will be moved by ignorance or a few designing men.

With every sentiment of esteem etc.[91]

To GEORGE GILPIN

Mount Vernon, November 1, 1785.

Dear Sir: After I had written to you on Saturday, I saw Lund Washington, who informed me that he had seen you the day before, and understood from you that it would not be convenient for you to spare your Scow until next week. as your letter to me says it may be had tomorrow I fear, in order to accomodate me, you have been induced to put your self to an inconvenience. To prevent which, I give you the trouble of this letter, as it would give me real concern if this were to be the case. The difference to me is very trifling whether I get it this week or next; I therefore beg that you would make the time perfectly suitable to your own business, and let me know it, to which I will conform, thankfully.

I am much obliged by the assurance of procuring me a level, and shall depend upon it. and am very much so for your kind offer to come down and put me in the best mode of getting up Mud; which may facilitate my experiments greatly. With great esteem and regard I am etc.[92]

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, November 2, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 10th. ulto. together with the wheat from the Cape of Good

[91] The text is from the Washington-Humphreys copies in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., furnished through the kindness of R. W. G. Vail, librarian.

[92] The original is in the John Hay Library, Brown University.

Hope; which you were so obliging as to send me by the Revd. Mr. Griffith; for both I thank you. The latter shall have a fair trial in the same inclosure with some presented to me by Colo. Spaight, (a Delegate in Congress from No. Carolina) which had been planted, and had obtained a vigorous growth before yours came to hand. This also was from the Cape, and brought probably by the same Vessel. I sowed it in Drills two feet apart, and five inches asunder in the rows, to make the most I could of it by cultivation in the Spring: this method will in my opinion be more productive than Mr. Bordeley's. It ought to be so indeed, as the expence of ground is much greater, and the workings will probably be oftener.

I pray you to present my best wishes and most respectful compliments to Mrs. Powel, to which please to add, and to accept yourself those of Mrs. Washington. I have the honor, etc.[93]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, November 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Pursuant to the request of your last letter (dated about the middle of Septr.) I had an attested copy of the proceedings, of the Potomac Company, and those of the Directors, taken from their Books and sent it to you by Post, in time for the Meeting which was proposed to be held by the Directors of the James river navigation on the 26th. of that month in Richmond; and requested, if it should be agreeable, to have a copy of your proceedings sent me in return. Having heard nothing from you since, and having experienced many instances of inattention and neglect in the Post Offices; I now take the liberty of enquiring whether my letter written as above has

[93] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

reached you. If it has not I will send another copy, tho' it will not come so seasonably as the first. My best respects to your Lady, and with very great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[94]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, November 8, 1785.

My Dr. Marqs: Having written fully to you about the first of Septr.; and nothing having occurred since worth reciting, I should not have given you the trouble of receiving a letter from me at this time, were it not for the good opportunity afforded me by Captn. Littlepage, and my desire not to suffer any of your letters to remain long by me unacknowledged.

I have now to thank you for your favors of the 9th. and 14th. of July; the first by Mr. Houdon, who stayed no more than a fortnight with me; and to whom, for his trouble and risk in crossing the Seas (altho' I had no agency in the business) I feel myself under personal obligations. The second giving an account of your intended tour, which, if compleated in the time you propose, will exhibit a fresh instance of the celerity of your movements. My good wishes have attended you thro' the whole of it; and this letter I hope will find you arrived at Paris in good health.

Doctr. Franklin has met with a grateful reception in Pennsylvania. He has again embarked on a troubled ocean; I am persuaded with the best designs, but I wish his purposes may be answered, which, undoubtedly are to reconcile the jarring interests of the State. He permitted himself to be nominated for the City of Philadelphia as a Counsellor, a step to the chair,[95]

[94] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 6 Washington wrote a brief note of introduction for Noah Webster to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Delegates of Virginia.

[95] Of President of Pennsylvania.

wch. no doubt he will fill; but whether to the satisfaction of both parties is a question of some magnitude, and of real importance to himself, at least to his quiet. His Grandson[96] shall meet with every civility and attention I can show him, when occasions offer.

One of my Jack's is by advices, arrived at Boston; but I still adhere to the request contained in my last, if you can have it complied with without much difficulty.

Your old aid George has taken to himself the wife of his choice: the *honey moon* is not yet passed; when that is over, I will set him about copying your Letters. I add no more at present, but the sincere and affectionate regard which I bear to you, and in which Mrs. Washington and all here join; as we do in respectful compliments and best wishes for Madame de Lafayette and your little flock. It is unnecessary to tell you how much I am, &c.[97]

To GEORGE CHAPMAN

Mount Vernon, November 10, 1785.

Sir: I rely more upon your goodness than on any just claim I can have for your excuse, for the liberty I am about to take with you.

I have a little boy something turned of four, and a girl of six years old living with me, for whom I want a Tutor. They are both promising children, the latter is a very fine one, and altho' they are of an age when close confinement may be improper; yet a man of letters, most of composition, and a good accomptant, would in other respects be essentially useful to *me* for a year or two to come. May I ask you therefore Sir, if it is in your

[96] William Temple Franklin.

[97] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

power, conveniently, to engage a person of this description for me?

Having already informed you what my wants are, it is needless to add what those of the children must be; your own judgement, when I inform you that I mean to fit the boy, in my own family, for a University, will point these out. The greater the knowledge of his preceptor is, the better he would suit. To teach French grammatically is essential, as it is now becoming a part of the education of youth in this Country.

I could not afford to give more than £50 Sterlg. pr. ann: but this sum, except in the article of cloathing, wou'd be clear, as the Gentleman would eat at my table; and have his lodging and washing found him; and his Linen and stockings mended by the Servants of my Family. It may happen that an Episcopal clergyman with a small living, and unencumbered by a family may be had to answer this description, such an one would be preferred; but I except none who is competent to my purposes, if his character is unimpeached.

I will make no apology to you Sir, for this liberty, you will oblige me if you can serve me; but I do not mean to put you to much trouble to do it. At any rate let me entreat an acknowledgement of this letter, with your sentiments upon it; as I shall remain in a state of suspence until I hear from you. I am, etc.[98]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, November 10, 1785.

My Dear Sir: Inclosed you have a copy of my last; since which nothing has occurred worthy of observation, except that in this part of the Country our Crops, particularly of Indian

[98] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Corn, have suffered exceedingly by a drought in July and August, and a storm in September.

As I am in the habit of giving you trouble, I will add a little more to what my last, I fear, may have occasioned.

The two youngest children of Mr. Custis: the oldest a girl of six years, the other a boy a little turned of four live with me. They are both promising children; but the latter is a remarkable fine one and my intention is to give him a liberal education; the rudiments of which shall, if I live, be in my own family. Having premised this, let me next, my good Sir, ask if it is in your power conveniently, to engage a proper preceptor for him? at present, and for a year or two to come, much confinement would be improper for him; but this being the period in which I should derive more aid from a man of Letters and an accomptant than at any other, to assist me in my numerous correspondences, and to extricate the latter from the disordered state into which they have been thrown by the war, I could usefully employ him in this manner until his attention should be more immediately required for his pupil.

Fifty or Sixty pounds Sterling pr. ann. with board, lodging, washing and mending, *in the family,* is the most my numerous expenditures will allow me to give; but how far it may command the services of a person well qualified to answer the purposes I have mentioned, is not for me to decide. To answer *my* purposes, the Gentleman must be a Master of composition, and a good Accomptant: to answer his pupil's, he must be a classical scholar, and capable of teaching the French language grammatically: the more universal his knowledge is, the better.

It sometimes happens that very worthy men of the *Cloth* come under this description; men who are advanced in years, and not very comfortable in their circumstances: such an one,

if unencumbered with a family, would be more agreeable to me than a young man just from college; but I except none of good moral character, answering my description, if he can be well recommended.

To you my Dr. Sir, I have offered this my first address; but if you should think my purposes cannot be subserved in your circle, upon the terms here mentioned; I beg, in that case, that you will be so obliging as to forward the enclosed letter as it is directed.[99] This gentleman has written to me upon another subject, and favored me with his lucubrations upon Education, wch mark him a man of abilities, at the same time that he is highly spoken of as a teacher, and a person of good character. In Scotland we all know that education is cheap, and wages not so high as in England: but I would prefer, on acct. of the dialect, an Englishman to a Scotchman, for all the purposes I want.

We have commenced our operations on the navigation of this river; and I am happy to inform you, that the difficulties rather vanish than increase as we proceed. James river is under similar circumstances; and a cut between the waters of Albemarle in No. Carolina, and Elizabeth river in this State, is also in contemplation, and if the whole is effected, and I see nothing to prevent it, it will give the greatest and most advantageous inland Navigation to this Country of any in the Union, or I believe, in the world: for as the Shannondoah, the South branch, Monocasy and Conogocheague are equally capable of great improvement, they will no doubt be immediately attempted; and more than probable a communication by good roads will be opened with the waters to the Westward of us; by means of the No. Branch of Potomac, which interlocks with the Cheat river and Yohoghaney (branches of the Monongahela) that

[99] See Washington's letter to George Chapman, Nov. 10, 1785, *ante*.

empty into the Ohio at Fort Pitt. The same is equally practicable between James river and the Green briar a branch of the Great Kanhawa, which empties into the same river 300 miles below that place; by means whereof the whole trade of that Territory which is now unfolding to our view, may be drawn into this State, equally productive of political as commercial advantages.

As I never ride to my plantations without seeing something which makes me regret having continued so long in the ruinous mode of farming, which we are in; I beg leave, tho' I am persuaded it will give you trouble, to recall your attention to the requests of my former letter, the duplicate of which you now have. Miscarriages, and where this is not the case, delays of letters must be my apology for reiterating the matter, that there may be time for decision, before the intervention of another year.

The marriage mentioned in my last is celebrated, but a fit of the gout prevented Colo. Bassett from being at it, consequently I am to lay a little longer out of your kind present. Mrs. Washington who has very indifferent health, joins me in the sincerest and best wishes for every blessing which can be bestowed on Mrs. Fairfax and yourself. With great esteem, &c.

P. S. Since writing the above and foregoing I have seen Mr. Battaile Muse who looks after your Estate; and upon enquiry of him, am authorized to inform you that your negroes, and everything under his care are tolerably well, and your prospect of a crop midling, which is saying a good deal *this year.*

I have the pleasure also to inform you that your Brother and his family were very well a few days ago when I was there, attending the business of the Potomac company at the Great Falls.

Your Sister and Family are likewise well. I saw her three oldest daughters last week, the elder of them, Milly, is on the

eve of matrimony with a Mr. Ogden Throckmorton, a match not very agreeable, it is said, to *her* friends, and kept off by Mrs. Bushrod 'till her death which happened some three or four months ago but now is yielded to by her Parents.[1]

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH

Mount Vernon, November 11, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I pray you to accept my thanks for your favor of the second, and for the present which it announced; than which nothing could be more acceptable, as I am desireous of getting into a stock of Deer with as much expedition as the nature of the case will admit. But if the Doe you offer me is not inconvenient to yourself; I shou'd be glad if she could remain at Chatham until a small paddock which I intend to enclose this Winter for the reception of these animals, is railed in, when I will fall upon some method, least liable to accidents, to bring her up.

I congratulate you on your success on the Falmouth turf. Our old acquaintance Saml. Gallaway retired from the Alexa. races, and from the pomps and vanities of this World almost in the same instant, having taken his departure for the impervious shades of death as soon as he got home.

My respectful compliments, in which Mrs. Washington, are offered to Mrs. Fitzhugh. I am, etc.[1]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, November 11, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I was at the point of sealing the dispatches herewith enclosed, when I recd. a visit from a Gentleman of New

[1] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

England, and happening to mention my want of a person for the purposes recited in my letter to you of yesterday's date, he seemed to think that such a character as I have there described, might be had from their Colleges upon very moderate terms, and promised to make enquiry, and to advise me of the result in a little time after his return.

The intention therefore of this letter is to request that the enclosure for Mr. Chapman may be detained in your hands until you hear further from me on this subject. But I would wish, notwithstanding, that *you* would do me the favor to extend *your* enquiries, and revolve characters in your own mind, against I shall hear from my New England correspondent that in case of a disappointment *there,* and I am not sanguine in my expectations from that quarter, I may be advanced in this business on your side the Atlantic.

With the greatest esteem, etc.[2]

To JOHN MARSDEN PINTARD

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 19th. of August from Madeira, accompanied by a box of Citron, Lemons and Onions; for which I pray you to accept my grateful thanks.

If a favourable opportunity should offer directly to this River, at a proper season of the year, you would encrease the obligation you have already laid me under, by sending me a few slips of the Vines of your best eating Grape; and a young fig tree or two.

From my esteem for your father, and the good opinion I have always heard expressed of you, it gives me pleasure to learn

[2] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

that you are appointed by Congress Commercial Agent for the United States, and I wish you may long continue in the Office to the mutual satisfaction of yourself and employers. I am, etc.[3]

To CHARLES VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 25th. of Septr. by Mr. Corbett. I am at a loss to express my sense of the great attention of Mr. Vaughan (your good father) to me, or of the obliging manner in which you have executed his request. The Puncheon of rum is safe arrived, and I pray you to accept my acknowledgement of, and to offer my thanks for it to your generous parent: I wish I had something more agreeable to present him.

I pray you to accept a dozen barrels of the Superfine flour which I make at my Mill. The quality of it is generally esteemed, and I hope what I now send will not discredit the mart.

It is to be regretted that Countries which could mutually assist and benefit each other; and which have a disposition to do, shou'd be prevented by an interposing power: but this being the case, I despair of seeing any change in the political system until G: B. is convinced by experience, that the contracted and illiberal policy she is now pursuing has recoiled upon herself. In the meantime it is to be lamented that any of her distant Dependencies should suffer from the effect of such ill judged regulations.

Being now fixed under my own Vine, and my own Fig tree, it would give me great pleasure to entertain you in the shade of them: there to assure you of the esteem and regard with which, I have the honor, etc.

[3] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

P. S. The flour intended for your use is branded on the *head* of the Cask G. Washington Bur Superfine and marked and numbered on the *side* S. V.—No. 1—12.[4]

To JOHN RUMNEY

Mount Vernon, November 18, 1785.

Sir: Since my last, I have been favored with your Letter of the 3d. of July, accompanied by patterns of the Irish flag; but as the prices were not annexed, I could form no judgment, nor make any choice from a comparison thereof with those of the former: nor indeed is it now essential, as the one I had fixed upon in my last, is cheaper I presume than either of the present samples wou'd be, and will answer my purposes equally well. I hope too the former are in forwardness, and that I may expect them soon, at any rate before the season for laying them shall advance upon me.

Inclosed I send you a Bill on London for fifty pounds sterling towards payment for these Flags; and will follow it with another to the full amount as soon as I am informed of the cost of them.

I acquainted you in my last that the House Joiner whom you sent me, answered my expectations fully. He is a good workman and a sober well behaved man. I am thankful to you for making so advantageous a choice; but as there seems to be a difficulty in obtaining a Brick layer, and indeed a risk attending it which I was not acquainted with at the time I applied to you to procure these artizans for me, I now wish you to decline all further enquiries after one.

I pray you to present (when opportunity offers) my respects to your father; and to be assured yourself of the esteem and regard with which I am, etc.[4]

[4] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To LUND WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, November 20, 1785.

Dear Lund: I know as little of G: Ws.[5] plans or wishes as you do, never having exchanged a word with him upon the subject in my life. By his Advertisemt. and from what has frequently dropped from Fanny, he is desirous of getting a place in this Country to live at.

Before their marriage he and Fanny were both told that it would be very agreeable to Mrs. W. and myself, that they should make this House their home 'till the squalling and trouble of children might become disagreeable. I have not repeated the matter since, because it was unnecessary, an offer once made is sufficient. It is hardly to be expected that two people young as they are, with their nearest connexions at extreme points, would like confinement: and without it, he could not answer my purposes as a Manager or Superintend, unless I had more leisure to attend to my own business; which by the by I shall aim at, let the consequences, in other respects, be as they may.

These however are no reasons for detaining you a moment longer in my employ than suits your interest, or is agreeable to your inclination, and family concerns. But as the proposition is new, and hath never been revolved in my mind, it will take some time to digest my own thoughts upon the occasion before it is hinted to another.

In the mean while if I can do with the aids you offer, and for which I sincerely thank you, I will ask your constant attention no longer than this year, at any rate not longer than the next. The inexplicitness of this answer cannot, I presume, put you to much if any inconvenience as yet; because retirement from, and not a change of business, is professedly your object.

[5] George Augustine Washington.

However unlucky I may have been in Crops, &c. of late years, I shall always retain a grateful sense of your endeavors to serve me; for as I have repeatedly intimated to you in my Letters from Camp, nothing but that entire confidence which I reposed, could have made me easy under an absence of almost nine years from my family and Estate, or could have enabled me, consequently, to have given not only my time, but my whole attention to the public concerns of this Country for that space. I am, &c.[6]

To REVEREND STEPHEN BLOOMER BALCH

Mount Vernon, November 22, 1785.

Revd. Sir: The expence attending the residence of my Nephews at Georgetown so far exceeds the idea I was led to entertain when they went there, that, in behalf of their Guardians, I am compelled to remove them.

When they were sent to the Academy under your management, I was informed by Colo. Fitzhugh, that the charge for schooling Board (if I am not mistaken) was £31. each. Cloathing if judiciously applied and properly attended to, I knew could not be a very great expence, for boys of their standing. But to my surprize, I have already paid Mr. Stoddert £67.18.6., Mr. Bayly £55.5.2., and yesterday in a letter from the latter, I am informed that there is half a years board due to him for each, and an accot. of cloathing besides, yet to be exhibited.

The leading motive Sir, which influenced me to send them to Georgetown was, their boarding with you; and I expected from what had passed between us, after the intervention which had occasioned the suspension of it, they would have returned

[6] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 20 Washington answered, briefly, an application from Alexander de Gabian, of Marseilles, France, who applied for membership in the Society of the Cincinnati. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

to you: but now Mr. Bayly writes me that he also declines boarding them after the 24th. inst: and points out a third person.

These several circumstances combining, added to a conviction founded in experience, that I cannot restrain the profuse and improper advances of Goods for them at a distance, have induced me to bring them to Alexandria, where I shall be a witness to their wants, and can supply their necessities upon more advantageous terms, than they have been hitherto. I am, etc.[7]

To WILLIAM BAILEY

Mount Vernon, November 22, 1785.

Sir: I have received your favor of the 19th. The expensive manner in which my nephews are proceeding at George Town, added to some other considerations, have determined me to remove them from the Academy at that place, to Alexandria.

I have already, for about fourteen months residence, paid to Mr. Stoddert and yourself £125.11.0 on their Accot.; and it appears from your letter of the above date, that for near half that time, they are yet owing for Board, and have an Accot. besides for cloathing; and these too almost independent of their schooling. I am, etc.[7]

*To MRS. DANIEL DULANY[8]

[November 23, 1785,[9]] Friday, past 2 'Oclock.

General Washington presents his best respects to Mrs. Dulany with the horse blueskin, which he wishes was better worth her acceptance.

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[7] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[8] Née Rebecca Smith.
[9] Approximate date.

Marks of antiquity have supplied the place of those beauties with which this horse abounded, in his better days. Nothing but the recollection of which, and of his having been the favourite of Mr. Dulany in the days of his Courtship, can reconcile her to the meagre appearance he now makes.

Mrs. Washington presents her Compliments and thanks to Mrs. Dulany for the Roots of Scarcity.[10]

To DOCTOR WILLIAM BROWN[11]

Mount Vernon, November 24, 1785.

Sir: I am really ashamed at this late hour to have the receipt of your favor of the 7th. of Octor., to acknowledge: but the truth is it was handed to me among many other Letters, got buried, and was forgot until your second favor of the 8th. inst: brought it to remembrance.

Since the receipt of the latter, my time has been much occupied with several matters, some of which were pressing: these, with the expectation of a personal interview (for I have been twice since in Alexandria without seeing you) must plead my excuse for a seeming, tho' far from an intentional disrespect.

As nothing is of more importance than the education of youth, so consequently nothing can be more laudably beneficial than the association which is formed in Alexandria to effect this desireable purpose. I therefore not only highly approve the institution, but am thankful for the honor done me by enrolling my name among the Managers of it; and as far as it is in my power will give it support.

[10] Beet roots.

The text is from a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Mrs. Jeanette C. Clagett, of Baltimore, Md.

[11] Of Alexandria, Va.

There is a matter which I will take some other opportunity of bringing before the Trustees for their consideration; that, if it can be made to comport with the present establishment of the Alexandria Academy, and engrafted therewith, it may become part of the institution. At an hour of more leisure I will communicate it. In the meanwhile, I am, etc.[12]

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since I had the honor of writing to you on the 20th. of March, which was done in haste (having but little notice of Capt: Boyles intended departure, before the time appointed for his sailing, and then to send my dispatches to Richmond 125 miles), I have been favored with your letters of the 3d. of March, 25th. of May, and 23d. of July. The first was forwarded to me by Captn. Bibby, whom I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing; tho' he gives me assurances of it, and to whom I shall have pleasure in rendering any services in my power consistently, if it should be found necessary.

The opposition which the virtuous characters of Ireland have given to the attempts of a British Administration's interfering with its manufactures, fettering its commerce, restraining the liberties of its subjects by their plan of reform &ca. &ca., will hand their names to posterity with that veneration and respect to which their amor patriae entitles them.

Precedents, as you justly observe, are dangerous things, they form the arm which first arrests the liberties and happiness of a Country. In the first approaches they may indeed assume the garb of plausibility and moderation, and are generally spoken of by the movers as a *chip in the porrage* (to avoid giving

[12] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

alarm), but soon are made to speak a language equally decisive and irresistible; which shews the necessity of opposition in the first attempts to establish them, let them appear under what guise or Courtly form they may; and proves too that vigilance and watchfulness can scarcely be carried to an excess in guarding against the insiduous arts of a Government founded in corruption.

I do not think there is as much wisdom and sound policy displayed in the different Legislatures of these States as might be; yet I hope every thing will come right *at last.* In republican Governments it too often happens that the people (not always seeing) must *feel* before they act: this is productive of errors and temporary evils, but generally these evils are of a nature to work their own cure.

The situation of affairs in Ireland, whilst the propositions were pending in the Parliament of it, would, I concluded, be a means of postponing your voyage to this Country; but as these seem to have met their quietus, I hope nothing else will intervene to prevent your fulfilling your expectation of coming in the Spring; the season will then be favourable for crossing the Atlantic.

Had I been present and apprized of your intention of making an aerial voyage with Monsr. Potain, I should have joined my entreaties to those of Lady Newenham to have prevented it. As yet, I see no object to warrant a gentleman of fortune (happy in himself, happy in a family wch. might be rendered miserable by a disaster, against which no human foresight can guard) running such a risk. It may do for young men of science and spirit to explore the upper regions: the observation there made may serve to ascertain the utility of the first discovery, and how far it may be applied to valuable purposes. To such *alone* I think these voyages ought at present to be consigned, and to them handsome public encouragements should

be offer'd for the risk they run in ascertaining its usefulness, or the inutility of the pursuit.

I have neither seen, nor heard of Mr. Thorpe, the stucco worker mentioned in your letter of the 23d. of July. A *good man* acquainted with that business would have come very opportunely to me, as I had, and now have a large room which I am about to finish in this way. I have at length engaged a person to do it; who from having no rival, imposes his own terms, which I think are exorbitant; good workmen of any profession, would meet encouragement in these States.

For the many marks of attention which you have been pleased to bestow on me, I feel myself your Debtor: could my picture which is placed in a group with Dr. Franklin, the Marqs. de la Fayette and others in your library, speak the sentiments of the original, it would salute you every morning with its acknowledgements. I have never seen more than one picture of Genl. Green, and that a mezzotinto print, sent to me a few days ago only, by the publisher a Mr. Brown at No. 10 George Yard, Lombard street, London; taken it is said from a painting done at Philada.

The Magazines, Gazettes &ca. which you had the goodness to forward to me, came safe, and I pray you to accept my thanks for them. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are presented to Lady Newenham and yourself. With sentiments of great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[13]

To LAWRENCE KORTRIGHT

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Sir: If it was in my power to give you the information, and the satisfaction which is required in your letter of the 10th. of

[13] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

October, I would do it with pleasure: but not recollecting enough of the particular circumstances attending the Sloop Hester, the whole of the business respecting this and other vessels, being entirely within the Department of the Quarter Mr. General, I can offer nothing which will facilitate your settlement with the public.

I do remember very well that the service, in the Spring of 1776, required an impress, and purchase of Vessels; that orders issued to the Quarter Master General for that purpose; and I have some recollection that the Sloop Hester was one of those Vessels which were taken into the service of the public, and that she was afterwards sold to Colo. Sears: but upon what terms; what became of her after that; how the Accots. respecting her stand, or how the matter is to be finally settled, I know not. I am, etc.[14]

*To CHEVALIER JOHN PAUL JONES

Mount Vernon, November 25, 1785.

Sir: I have been honoured with your letter of the 18th. of July from Paris, enclosing certificates in favor of Captns. Stack and Macarthy.[15] I pray you to be assured that I should have pleasure in doing justice to the merits of these Officers, and in obliging you if the power of deciding lay with me. But, though I am in sentiment with the Gentlemen who have declared in favor of the pretensions of Captns. Stack and Maccarthy's right to become members of the Cincinnati, yet, in matters of opinion I have no authority to pronounce them such. As French Officers, having borne Continental Commissions, my opinion is that their best mode *would* have been, to have got themselves

[14] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[15] Capts. Edward Stack and Eugene MacCarthy had served as volunteers on the *Bon Homme Richard*.

admitted as members of [some][16] State Society before the Kings edict, or order in Council took effect, for if I mistake not all Officers in the Service of France whose names are not particularly enumerated in that order are excluded thereby.

This however is a matter of which they, or you, can be better ascertained of than I. At any rate nothing can be done in this Country until the next *General* Meeting; and that cannot happen in less than Eighteen months, and may be much longer delayed. I have the honor etc. [M.L.]

To WAKELIN WELCH

Mount Vernon, November 28, 1785.

Sir: I request the favor of you to send me for the use of Mrs. Washington, a handsome and fashionable gold watch, with a fashionable chain or string, such as are worn at present by Ladies in genteel life.

These to be paid for, as the other things are, from the fund in the Bank. I am, etc.

P.S. Let the hour and minute hands be set with Diamonds.[17]

To SAMUEL VAUGHAN

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have been honored with your favor of the 9th. and have received the pamphlet which you were so obliging as to send me, entitled "Considerations on the Order of Cincinnatus,

[16] The bracketed word has been supplied from the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On November 26 Washington commenced a record on folio sheets of work done at the different farms of Mount Vernon. He continued it up to Apr. 15, 1786, inclusive. George Augustine Washington then kept the record, commencing April 22, and continued it through the year 1786. These folio sheets are in the *Washington Papers* under date of Nov. 26, 1785.

[17] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

by the Count de Mirabeau."[18] I thank you my good Sir, for this instance of your attention; but wish you had taken time to have perused it first, as I have not yet had leisure to give it a reading. I thought, as most others seemed to think, that all the exceptionable parts of that Institution had been done away at the last general meeting; but with those who are disposed to cavil, or who have the itch of writing strongly upon them, nothing can be made to suit their palates: the best way therefore to disconcert and defeat them, is to take no notice of their publications; all else is but food for declamation.

There is not I conceive, an unbiassed mind, that would refuse the Officers of the late Army the right of associating for the purpose of establishing a fund for the support of the poor and distressed of their fraternity, when many of them it is well known, are reduced to their last shifts by the ungenerous conduct of their Country, in not adopting more vigorous measures to render their Certificates[19] productive. That charity is all that remains of the original Institution, none who will be at the trouble of reading it can deny.

I have lately received a letter from Mr. Vaughn (your son) of Jamaica, accompanied by a puncheon of rum, which he informs me was sent by your order as a present to me. Indeed, my Dr. Sir, you overwhelm me with your favors, and lay me under too many obligations to leave a hope remaining of discharging them. Hearing of the distress, in which that Island, with others in the Wt. Indies is involved by the late hurricane, I have taken the liberty of requesting Mr. Vaughans acceptance, for his own use, of a few barrels of superfine Flour of my own

[18] Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, Comte de Mirabeau, first published his "Considérations sur l'ordre de Cincinnatus" in London, in 1784. An English translation was also published in London in 1785; the English translation was published in Philadelphia in 1786; and a German translation in Berlin in 1787.

[19] Of pay due.

manufacturing. My best respects, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Vaughan, yourself and family, and with the highest esteem &c.[20]

To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 16th. came duly to hand, and I thank you for its several communications. The resolutions which were published for consideration, vesting Congress with powers to regulate the Commerce of the Union, have I hope been acceded to. If the States individually were to attempt this, an abortion, or a many headed Monster would be the issue. If we consider ourselves, or wish to be considered by others as a united people, why not adopt the measures which are characteristic of it, and support the honor and dignity of one? If we are afraid to trust one another under qualified powers there is an end of the Union. Why then need we be sollicitous to keep up the farce of it?

It gives me pleasure to hear that there is such an accordance of sentiments between the Eastern and Western parts of this State. My opinion of the separation has always been, to meet them half way, upon fair and just grounds; and part like friends disposed to acts of brotherly kindness thereafter. I wish you had mention'd the territorial line between us. The Port Bill; the assize Law (or any substitute for the speedy Administration of Justice) being established; good faith with respect to treaties preserved by public acts, taxation continued and regularly collected, that justice to one part of the community may keep pace with relief to the other, and our national character for *Justice,* thereby supported; a due attention to the Militia, and encouragements to extend the inland navigation of this

[20] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

Commonwealth where it is useful and practicable, (which will not only be of amazing convenience and advantage to its Citizens but sources of immense wealth to the Country through some of its channels), are among the great and important objects which will come before you, and a due attention to them will, I hope, mark the present epocha for having produced able statesmen, sound patriots and liberal minded men.

At a late meeting of the Directors of the Potomac navigation at the great Falls, and from a critical examination of the ground at that place; we unanimously determined to petition the Assemblies of the two States[21] to be relieved from the expence of sinking our canals four feet deep, as a considerable *expence* and *no advantage* that we could discover, was likely to attend it. As the petition which is herewith sent under cover to you and Colo. Syms,[22] recites the reasons on which it is founded I shall not repeat them: the public as well as the company's interest calls for an œconomical use of the fund which is subscribed for this undertaking; the enemies therefore (if there are any) to the navigation, are equally bound with its friends, to give it support.

I should be much obliged to you for desiring the public printer to send me the Journals of the present Session from its commencement, and to do it thro' the session as fast as they are printed, by the Post. I pray you to pay him for *them,* and for my Gazette (if Hay is the public printer) and I will repay you with thanks when you return.

I am very glad to hear you have got so well over your fever. Mrs. Stuart has had a bad cold, but is getting better. All here join me in best wishes for you, and I am, etc.[23]

[21] The text of this petition is printed in the *American Historical Review,* vol. 28, pp. 497, *et seq.*

[22] Col. Charles Simms.

[23] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since my last, I have been favored with your letters of the 10th. and 18th. inst:, the last covering Mr. Rawlins's plan and estimate for my new room, for your exertion to obtain which, I thank you. The plan is plain, as I requested; but the Estimate I think is large: however as I pretend not to be a competent judge of work, and know that we are always in the power of workmen, I will not decide absolutely upon the moderation he pretends to have observed; but as your readiness to oblige me in this business has already involved you in trouble, I will request the favor of you to take a little more, to bring it to an explanation and close.

For this purpose I send you herewith Rawlins's plan and estimate; and would beg the favor, as I have understood that Mr. Goff[24] of Baltimore has had much work of this kind done by Mr. Rawlins, to compare my plan and estimate with his work and prices; and if Mr. Goff is a man of information, and one who scrutinizes into work and prices from the time it takes to execute it, to ask his opinion of the charge.

If the result of your scrutiny is in favor of Mr. Rawlins's moderation, I have then to pray that the matter may be fixed with him, and a time (not to exceed if possible, the middle of April) agreed on to begin the work with a serious intention to execute it with dispatch: also that the article of travelling expences may be defined and reduced to a stipulated sum. Or, wch. would come cheaper to me, that my waggon (a covered one) should remove his people and tools hither and back; and an equivalent named in lieu of expences for himself. This will leave no ground for discontent on either side, than which

[24] Gough(?).

nothing being more disagreeable to me, I always endeavour to avoid it: I wish to know also, whether he, or I am to furnish the materials.

If on the other hand it shall be found that his price is too high (for it is not amiss to observe here, that almost the whole of the mouldings and figures are cast) I should be obliged to you to know from him whether he will take less, and precisely the sum to execute the work according to the plan, and this without much time for consideration; for having been twice disappointed already, and the work thereby considerably delayed, to my great inconvenience, I am determined if Mr. Rawlins will not do it reasonably, and begin it seriously in the Spring, to write immediately to Sir Edwd. Newenham of Dublin, who has already introduced the subject to me, and given strong assurances of a visit in the Spring, to bring me a compleat workman when he comes, on yearly wages. But this I would avoid (as you will please to inform Mr. Rawlins) if he would do the work at near its value, and in season. If you finally engage with Mr. Rawlins I should like to have a specific agreement drawn, to prevent mistakes or further delay; for the doing of which I wou'd chearfully pay an Attorney. Enclosed is a letter for Mr. Rawlins, open.

Had the public prints spoken truth respecting the present from his catholic Majesty, and two Jacks had arrived; it would have given me great pleasure to have obliged your friends on the Eastern shore by a compliance with your request. There were only two presented to me by the King of Spain, one of which by the advices I have received from Boston, was lost in a storm on his passage to Beverly. The other will scarcely do more, if he gets home safe, than answer my own purposes; but if you, or any friend of yours have a she ass which you would wish to put to him for preservation of the breed, he is much

at your service, and you shall be very welcome to the use of him for her.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for Mrs. Tilghman and yourself; and with sentiments of sincere esteem and regard, I am, etc.[25]

To JOHN RAWLINS

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Sir: Your Letter and plan came safe, tho' I do not pretend to be a competent judge of this kind of work, yet from the little experience I have had in it, and from a certain knowledge that most of the mouldings and decorations are with great ease and expedition cast, of a material too which is by no means expensive, I do not scruple to declare that your Estimate exceeded my expectation.

This, and not understanding the plan fully from an unaccustomedness to drawings, together with the indefinite charge of travelling expences, which may be great or little; and a desire of having something finally determined without giving the trouble of coming here again; or of fixing matters by an intercourse of letters which might be tedious and troublesome, and the first of which by no means suiting me, as I must be upon a certainty, having been twice disappointed and put to much inconvenience for want of the room. These reasons I say, have induced me to communicate my ideas to Colo. Tilghman on this business, and to authorize him on the spot to fix matters decidedly with you. Any Agreement therefore which he may make on by behalf, will be as obligatory on me as if I was present to sign and ratify it.

If an Agreement takes place, I wish to know precisely, and as soon as may be, what will be previously necessary for my

[25] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Joiners and Carpenters to do, or to prepare that there may be no delay after you arrive; for besides the inconvenience I already feel from the want of the new room, you know that to complete this, the communication with another must be opened, and that unless both are finished before the season arrives which requires fire, I shall be much distressed. Whilst the weather is warm, the Common Hall and Piazza will do very well, as substitute for the Drawing Room or Parlour; but when the weather becomes cool we must retire to a fireside.

I think it highly probable that the ceilings of my upper rooms may want plaistering, which would make the job more deserving attention; some of them I am sure do, and if we can agree upon a price I may be inclined to renew the whole. I am, etc.[26]

*To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have had the honor to receive your Excellency's favor of the 11th. and am much obliged to you for the Commissioners report respecting the cut from the Waters of Elizabeth River to those of Albemarle Sound. And it is with great pleasure I have since heard that that matter is in a prosperous way in our Assembly, and placed on a footing (reasonable and just I think) which is likely to meet the approbation of the Legislature of No. Carolina. It has always been my opinion since I first investigated the Great dismal Swamp as a member and manager of that Company that the most advantageous Cut would be found to be through Drummonds pond to the head of Pasquetank and I have Surveys and Notes which prove it I think, incontestably. Mr. Andrews's conjectures, with respect to Locks, I conceive is justly founded; for if the bed of the lake is above

[26] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the level of the Water of Elizabeth River and Pasquetank the reflux by means of the Canal being greater than the influx must undoubtedly drain the Pond and render it useless as a reservoir without these Locks; but the places at which it may be proper to establish them must I should suppose depend upon the level and suitableness of the ground to receive them after the cut is made which should be begun at the extreme ends that the water may run of[f] (and if with any velocity) to contribute to the Work.

If this cut is effected, the obstructions in the Roanoke removed (which will most assuredly follow) and the inland Navigation of the Rivers James and Potomack compleated according to Law it will open channels of convenience and wealth to the Citizens of this State that the imagination can hardly extend to and render this the most favoured Country in the Universe. These measures only require a beginning to shew the practicability, ease and advantage with which they may be effected. Rappahanock and Shanondoah (the latter through a long extent of it) will follow the example and I see nothing to prevent the two branches of York River from doing the same.

The consequence in the article of draught Cattle alone, and to our Roads will be inconceivably great. The latter with small amendments will always be in good order when the present number of Carriages are no longer taring them to pieces in the most inclement seasons of the year; and the ease to, and saving in the former will be felt most interestingly by the farmer and Planter in their annual operations.

But until these things are accomplished and even admitting they were done, do you not think, my good Sir, that the credit, the saving, and convenience of this Country, all require that our great roads leading from one public place to another should be

shortned, straightned, and established by Law; and the power in the County Courts to alter them withdrawn?

To me these things seem indispensably necessary, and it is my opinion they will take place in time the longer therefore they are delayed the more people will be injured by the Alterations when they happen. It is equally clear to me, that putting the lowest valuation[27] upon the labour of the people who work upon the roads under the existing Law and custom of the present day the repairs of them by way of Contract to be paid by an assessment on certain districts (until the period shall arrive when turnpikes may with propriety be established) would be infinitely less burthensome to the Community than the present mode. In this case too the Contractor would meet with no favor; every man in the district wd. give information of neglects; whereas negligence under the present system is winked at by the only people who know how, or can inform against the Overseers; for strangers had rather encounter the inconvenience of bad roads than the trouble of an information and go away prejudiced against the Country for the polity of it. With great esteem and respect etc. [V.S.L.]

*To JAMES MADISON

Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785.

My dear Sir: Receive my thanks for your obliging communications of the 11th I hear with much pleasure that the Assembly are engaged, seriously, in the consideration of the revised Laws. A short and simple code, in my opinion, tho' I have the sentiments of some of the Gentlemen of the long robe against me, would be productive of happy consequences, and redound to the honor of this or any Country which shall adopt such.

[27] The word "possible" seems to have been crossed off at this point.

I hope the resolutions which were published for the consideration of the House, respecting the reference to Congress for the regulation of a Commercial system will have passed. The proposition in my opinion is so self evident that I confess I am at a loss to discover wherein lyes the weight of the objection to the measure. We are either a United people, or we are not. If the former, let us, in all matters of general concern act as a nation, which have national objects to promote, and a national character to support. If we are not, let us no longer act a farce by pretending to it. for whilst we are playing a dble. game, or playing a game between the two we never shall be consistent or respectable; but *may* be the dupes of some powers and, most assuredly, the contempt of all. In any case it behoves us to provide good Military Laws, and look well to the execution of them, but, if we mean by our conduct that the States shall act independently of each other it becomes *indispensably* necessary, for therein will consist our strength and respectabity in the Union.

It is much to be wished that public faith may be held inviolate. Painful is it even in thought that attempts should be made to weaken the bands of it. It is a dangerous experiment, once slacken the reins and the power is lost, and it is questionable with me whether the advocates of the measure foresee all the consequences of it. It is an old adage that honesty is the best policy; this applies to public as well as private life, to States as well as individuals. I hope the Port and assize Bills no longer sleep, but are awakened to a happy establishment. The first with some alterations, would, in my judgment be productive of great good to this Country; without it, the Trade thereof I conceive will ever labor and languish; with respect to the Second if it institutes a speedier Administration of Justice it is equally desirable.

It gives me great pleasure to hear that our assembly were in a way of adopting a mode for establishing the Cut betwn. Elizabeth river and Pasquotank which was likely to meet the approbation of the State of No. Carolina. It appears to me that no Country in the Universe is better calculated to derive benefits from inland Navigation than this is, and certain I am, that the conveniences to the Citizens individually, and the sources of wealth to the Country generally, which will be opened thereby will be found to exceed the most sanguine imagination; the Mind can scarcely take in at one view all the benefits which will result therefrom. The saving in draught Cattle, preservation of Roads &ca. &ca. will be felt most interestingly. This business only wants a beginning. Rappahanock, Shannondoah, Roanoke, and the branches of York River will soon perceive the advantages which water transportation (in ways hardly thought of at first) have over that of Land and will extend Navigation to almost every mans door.

From the complexion of the debates in the Pensylvania it should seem as if that Legislature intended their assent to the proposition from the States of Virginia and Maryland (respecting a road to the Yohiogany should be conditional of permission given to open a Communication between the Chesapeak and Delaware by way of the rivers Elk and Christeen, which I am sure will never be obtained if the Baltimore interest can give it effectual opposition.

The Directors of the Potomack Company have sent to the Delegates of this County to be laid before the Assembly a Petition (which sets forth the reasons) for relief in the depth of the Canals which it may be found necessary to open at the great and little Falls of the River. As public œconomy and private interest equally prompt the measure and no possible disadvantage

that we can see will attend granting the prayer of it, we flatter ourselves no opposition will be given to it.

To save trouble to expidite the business, and to secure uniformity without delay, or an intercourse between the Assemblies on so trivial a matter we have taken the liberty of sending the draught of a Bill to Members of both Assemblies which if approved will be found exactly similar. With the highest esteem etc.[28]

*To COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU

Mount Vernon, December 1, 1785.

My dear Count: Your letter of the 2d. of June, which you had the goodness to write to me at the moment of taking leave of the venerable Doctr. Franklin, now lyes before me; and I read the renewed assurances of your friendship with sentiments of gratitude and pleasure, short of nothing but the satisfaction I should feel at seeing you, and the recollection of the hours, on which, toiling together, we formed our friendship. A friendship which will continue, I hope, as long as we shall continue Actors on the present theatre.

A Man in the vigor of life could not have borne the fatigues of a passage across the Atlantic with more fortitude, and greater ease than Doctor Franklin did; and since, instead of setting himself down in the lap of ease, which might have been expected from a person of his advanced age, he has again entered upon the bustling scenes of public life, and in the chair of State, is endeavouring to reconcile the jarring interests of the Citizens of Pennsylvania. If he should succeed, fresh laurels will crown his brow; but it is to be feared that the task is too great for

[28] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

human wisdom to accomplish. I have not yet seen the good old Gentleman, but have had an intercourse by letters with him.

Rumours of War still prevail, between the Emperor and the Dutch; and seem, if News Paper Accounts are to be credited, to be near at hand. If this event should take place, more powers must engage in it, and perhaps a general flame will be kindled 'ere the first is extinguished. America may think herself happy in having the Atlantic for a barrier, otherways, a spark might set her a blazing. At present we are peaceable; and our Governments are acquiring a better tone. Congress, I am persuaded will soon be vested with greater powers. The Commercial interest throughout the Union are exerting themselves to obtain these, and I have no doubt will effect it. We shall be able then, if a Commercial treaty is not entered into with Great Britain to meet her on the restrictive and contracted ground she has taken; and interdict her Shipping, and trade, in the same manner she has done those of these States. This, and this only, will convince her of the illiberallity of her conduct towards us. or, that her policy has been too refined, and over strained, even for the accomplishment of her own purposes.

Mrs. Washington is thankful for your constant remembrance of her, and joins me in every good wish for you and Madame de Rochambeau. With sentiments of the warmest attachment, and greatest respect I have the honor etc.[29]

To CHARLES SIMMS AND DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, December 3, 1785.

Gentn: As President of the Board of Directors for the Potomac company, I have the honor to enclose you a Petition which we pray you to present to your honorable House; and to use your

[29] From the original in the *Rochambeau Papers* in the Library of Congress.

best endeavours to have the prayer of it enacted into a Law. The Petition is so full, and the request of it so reasonable, that we do not suppose there can be the least opposition to it, otherwise than by delay; because the enemies of it (if there are any) must on the score of public saving, yield assent to it.

We have taken the liberty to accompany the Petition with the draft of a Bill to be enacted into a Law. A Petition and Bill similar to those have been sent to the Maryland Assembly. The reasons for this you will see into at once; they are, to render it unnecessary for the two Assemblies to correspond on so trivial a subject, to prevent trouble to each, to prevent delay, and that both Acts may be exactly similar.[30] I have the honor, etc.[31]

To CHARLES CARROLL AND THOMAS STONE

Mount Vernon, December 3, 1785.

Dr. Sir: The Directors of the Potomac Comy. upon a strict examination of the ground at the Great Falls of the river, and their ideas of that at the little Falls, find it necessary to apply to the Assemblies of the two States, to be relieved from that depth of canal which the late Acts for improving and extending the navigation of the river require.

The reasons are set forth at large in the Petition which, as President of the Board of Directors I now have the honor to transmit to Mr. Chase as a delegate, and member of the company; a similar one having gone to the Assembly of Virginia. But in a word, from our view of the matter, it is sufficient to inform you that to dig four feet at these places will add greatly to the expence, without deriving the smallest advantage: we have therefore prayed for two feet depth, instead of four; and

[30] Practically the same letter was sent to Samuel Chase, of the Maryland Legislature. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

[31] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

apprehending no other opposition but what may proceed from delay, for friends and foes (if there are any of the latter) to the Undertaking, ought to support the Bill upon the principle of œconomy, is the reason of my giving you the trouble of this Letter, praying your assistance in facilitating the passage of the Bill.[32] I have the honor, etc.[33]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, December 4, 1785.

Sir: Your letters of the 15th. and 26th. of last month, are both at hand. With respect to the latter, I agree that Danl. Harrel may have the Lott No. 2 on the terms mentioned therein, and you may fill up Leases accordingly.

In answer to the first letter, rather than involve myself in uncertain law suits, but certain expence and perplexity, I would allow for paper payments of rent, the same as specie; but as you know what has been the practice and the consequence thereof in your own case as Collector for Colo. Fairfax, and in that of others under similar circumstances, I should conceive that you could determine the point, of conduct proper to be pursued better than I, who have been entirely out of the way of knowing what the Law, custom, or judicial proceedings in the Courts have decided. However, as I have already observed, rather than go into a litigation of the matter (unless there is every reason to expect a decision in my favor) I wou'd make the same allowance for paper, however unjustly and rascally it has been imposed, as I would for specie, taking care to shew no indulgence hereafter to those who had made them.

[32] Practically the same letter was sent to William Ramsay. A copy of this is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[33] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Receipts for rents, from my brother will be sufficient for the Tenants; but it will be necessary in your settlemt. with them, to take an account of all these payments, that I may be able to settle with his Estate. This is indispensably necessary, as, from what I can learn, he has been very inattentive himself in making proper entries of the sums paid him: the date of each receipt is as essential as the name of the person is to whom given. I am, etc.[34]

To COMTE DE DAMAS[35]

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: I had the honor to be favor'd with your letter by Mr. Houdon, and thank you for your kind recollection of, and for the favorable sentiments you have expressed for me.

The moments I spent with the army of France in this Country, are amongst the most pleasing of my life, and I shall ever remember with grateful sensibility, the polite attentions of all the officers who composed it, and of none more than yours.

I pray you to be persuaded of the interest I take in your happiness; and the pleasure I feel in assuring you of the esteem and regard with which, I have the honor, etc.[34]

*To LOUIS GUILLAUME OTTO

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: The letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 10th. of October, only came to hand the 28th. of last month.

My particular acknowledgments are due to you for your recollection of, and attention to me; and I pray you to be assured of the pleasure I felt at hearing that the place lately filled

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[35] Charles François Louis Joseph César, Comte de Damas.

by Mr. de Marbois, near the Sovereignty of these States, was so happily supplied. On this instance of his most Christian Majesty's attention to your merits, I offer you my sincere congratulations.

For the favourable sentimts. entertained of me in France and particularly at the Court all my gratitude is due; but to none in a higher degree than to the Chevalier de la Luzerne; for whom I have the highest esteem and regard. For your obliging offers of Service here, or in France, I sincerely thank you and at the sametime I give you the trouble of forwarding a few letters by the Packet, beg you to believe that with much truth I have the honor etc.[36]

To RICHARD THOMAS

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: Having, a few days ago only, received your letter of the 13th. of August from Charleston, enclosing the duplicate of one from a Mr. Edmund Richards of Plymouth Dock, dated the first of Feby. last; I delay not a Post to inform you, as I have already done the said Edmd. Richards, that he is under a delusion which has not a single reality for a support, that I am astonished at his information, and which he had been at the trouble of enquiring a little more minutely into matters, before he had determined to make such a pointed application to me, or to have communicated his demands of me to others, for an Estate; First, because such an Estate as he speaks of was never left in trust to me; Secondly, because I never had the *least* acquaintance with his Uncle Richard Richards, or ever knew that there was such a man in existence; Thirdly, because I have just as much, and no more knowledge of Lawyer Haines and

[36] From the original in the *Paris Archives, Aff. Estrang., Mems. et Docs., E. U.*, vol. 6.

Lawyer Baitain, than I have of Richd. Richards; And fourthly, because I never heard of such an Estate as he claims, or the most trifling circumstance concerning it.

Of all these things Sir, you may, as I shall never write to Edmd. Richards again, give him the clearest and most unequivocal assurances; and add, that the most incontestible proofs of wch. he, or you in his behalf, may find, if either are disposed to examine further into the matter. I am, etc.[37]

To LOUIS DOMINIQUE ETHIS DE CORNY

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Sir: I am really ashamed to have been so long in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 3d. of August last year; but circumstances which would be more tedious in the recital, than important when told, have been the cause of it.

I have now the honor of enclosing you the receipt of the Treasurer of the Society of the Cincinnati of this State, for your Bill on Colo. Wadsworth; and wish it was in my power to have accompanied it with a Diploma: but it has so happened, that except a few which were struck at Philadelphia for the Members of that State at their own expence, none have yet been presented to me by the Secretary, for signing. I have the honor, etc.[37]

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, December 5, 1785.

Dr. Sir: Altho' I am so great a delinquent in the epistolary way, I will not again tread over the usual ground for an excuse, but rather silently throw myself upon your philanthropy to obtain one.

[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

In reading the Memoir which passed thro' my hands to you (for I have no copy of it) I do not recollect that I was struck with any exagerations or improprieties in it; nor is it in my power to give you a precise detail of the facts about which you enquire, without unpacking my papers, and entering upon a voluminous research therefor; which might not after all elucidate the points. Whether Genl. Howe commanded in person at the intended surprize and attack of the Marqs. de la Fayette at Barren Hill, I am unable positively to say: I would suppose however that he did, first, because the narrative says so, 2dly because he did not relinquish the command until within a few days of the evacuation of Philada., and 3dly., because the British army came out in full force. That the column on the right commanded by Genl. Grant was strong, can admit of no doubt; (and report to the best of my recollection made the number 7000) because it was design'd to turn the Marquis's *left* flank, get into his rear, and cut off his retreat by the nearest and most direct roads; whilst he was to have been attacked in front, and on his right (which was next the Schuylkill) by the Commander in chief, and light infantry; by the first in front, by the other on the flank.

The French troops which were landed from on board the flat, formed a junction with the American Troops before, and were all under the command of the Marquis 'till my arrival. The position at Williamsburgh was taken I believe with a view to form the junction, being favorable to it; the defile between the College Creek which empties into James river and Queen's Creek which empties into York river, being very narrow, and behind the former of which the French landed in perfect security.

My excursions up this river (for I have made several) have afforded me much satisfaction, as we find the Undertaking to

extend and improve the navigation of it, is not only practicable; but that the difficulties which were expected to be met with, rather decrease than multiply upon us.

I come now, My good Doctor, to acknowledge in a particular manner the receipt of your obliging favor of the 7th. Ulto., and to thank you for your kind and valuable present of Fish which is very fine and had a more successful passage than the last, no Accot. of which having ever yet been received. I have too Mrs. Washington's particular thanks to offer you for the flower roots and seeds, which she will preserve in the manner directed. I have put into a box with earth, shrubs of the redwood (or redbud) and Fringe tree, which General Lincoln promised his Vessel should heave to and take for you as she passed by. I was going to send other flowering shrubs, but upon mentioning the names of them, the Genl. and Colo. Henley said your Country already abounded with them. I forgot however, to ask them if you have the Magnolio; if you have not, I can send some by another opportunity.

I hope this Letter will find you quite relieved from the feverish complaint you had when you wrote last, and Mrs. Gordon in perfect health, to whom and yourself Mrs. Washington and the family (who are all well) join me in every good wish. Fanny Bassett and my nephew Geo: A. Washington have fullfilled an engagement of long standing, and are now one bone, and one flesh. With great esteem, etc.[38]

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, December 7, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 26th. ulto: came to my hands by the last Post; and the object of this shall be confined to a single

[38] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

point, taking another opportunity of writing to you more largely.

The meaning of my last Letter to you was not well expressed, if it was understood that actions of Trespass were to be brought, before the issue of the ejectments was known. I had no idea of this, because if my opponents should succeed in the latter, there would be no ground for the former; and I should incur a certain expence without a chance of profit: from the statement of the cases which you have mentioned, I now leave it altogether discretionary in you, whether to bring them afterwards or not. I never should have thought of this mode of punishment, had I not viewed the Defendants as wilful and obstinate sinners; presevering after timely and repeated admonition, in a design to injure me, but I am not all tenaceous of this matter and take the chance of this letter's going by way of Baltimore, and *another* by the way of Philada., to request that these Actions may be at least delayed, if not altogether laid aside, according to circumstances.[39] I am, etc.[40]

To CAPTAIN THOMAS BIBBY[41]

Mount Vernon, December 10, 1785.

Sir: Having delayed until this time to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 4th. of May from New York, is to be ascribed more to the expectation I have been under of having the pleasure of seeing you in this State and at this house, than to any other cause: and I take the present occasion of assuring you that if business or inclination should bring you to the

[39] This letter was forwarded to Tench Tilghman with a brief note (December 6), asking him to forward it "as it is of some consequence to me that the enclosed should reach Mr. Smith before he commences his tour of the Western Counties in Pennsylvania." A copy of this is in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

[40] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[41] Of the British Royal Fuzileers.

southward, I should be happy in the opportunity of testifying my respect for the introduction of Sir Edward Newenham, and of offering you the civilities which are due to a gentleman of your merit.

By mistake a packet which I herewith send was forwarded to me by a Mr. McKuinan,[42] to whose care with another for myself, it was comitted by Sir Edward.[43] I hope it will reach you safe, and that the delay occasioned by the circuitous rout it has taken will be attended with no inconvenience. I have the honor, etc.[44]

*To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, December 10, 1785.

Dear Sir: Since writing to you by the last Post I have finished the measurement of my Corn, and find that I shall not make half enough to Serve me. Permit me to request the favor of you therefore to enquire upon what terms any of the Delegates from the Eastern Shore would contract with you in my behalf for 800 Bushs. of clean and good Oats, to be delivered at my landing as soon after Christmas as may be. If you can engage the Oats at a price not exceeding three shillings pr Bushel, I would then pray you to close a bargain without the delay of advising me, and reduce it to writing with a penalty for Non-performance on either side; but, if they are not to be had at this price to fix the lowest terms on wch. they may be had upon my saying yea by return of the Post after they are communicated to me.

The above are for Horses. I am under as pressing a necessity to provide for my People, all the Corn I have made not being more than sufficient to support my Plantations. My house peo-

[42] Charles McKieinan (McKuinan).

[43] On December 10 Washington wrote McKieinan a brief acknowledgment. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[44] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

ple are without, and none in these parts to be had. If there[fore] the Plantations below[45] (in New Kent and King William) have any to spare I should be glad to get two hundred Barrels for which I will allow the same they sell at to others, or the same price that Corn bears on that River.[46] This would be doubly convenient to me, for to be plain my Coffers are not overflowing with money. You cannot too soon give me a definitive answer on this point, Nor indeed with respect to the Oats, as I must not trust to the Chapter of Accidents for a supply.

With great esteem etc. [HD.C.]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have received your favor of the 29th. Ulto. and thank you for your repeated offer of Services in Philadelphia. By Major Fairlie[47] I send you Six pounds Pensylvania Curry. and would thank you to pay Mr. Cary Printer for his Paper, and to pay Oswald[48] for this. I know not upon what footing he sends them. by no order of mine do they come, and it is only now and then, I get one. yet I do not want to lay under any obligation to him. Claypoole and Dunlaps Papers now come regularly and I could wish they were also paid.

For what can sheet copper be bought in Phila. at this time? I believe I shall have occasion to add to the quantity which was sent me from thence last year, to complete my buildings.

Mrs. join me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Biddle and family, with great esteem I am etc. [H.S.P.]

[45] The "Letter Book" has "of Mr. Custis."
[46] The Pamunky.
[47] Maj. James Fairlie.
[48] Eleazer Oswald. He was publisher of *The Independent Gazetteer*, of Philadelphia, Pa.

To THE SECRETARY AT WAR

Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785.

My dear Sir: Majr. Farlie[49] gave me the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 22d. Instt., and thereby knowing that you, Mrs. Knox and the family were all well.

It has always been my opinion you know, that our Affairs with respect to the Indians would never be in a good train whilst the British Garrisons remained on the American side of the territorial line, and that these Posts would not be evacuated by them, as long as any pretext could be found to with-hold them.

They know the importance of these Posts too well to give them up soon, or quietly. their trade with the Indians in a great measure depend upon the possession of them, knowing full well that all the assertions of our Commrs. with respect to the Articles of Peace, and their obligation to surrender them, is no more than chaff before the wind when opposed by the scale of possession.

I am sorry the State Societies should hesitate to comply with the recommendation of the General Meeting of the Cincinnati, holden at Phila. in 1784. I then thought, and have no cause Since to change my opinion, that nothing short of what was then done would appease the clamours which were raised against this Institution. Some late attacks have been made upon it; amongst which a Pamphlet written by the Count de Mirabeau, a French Gentleman, has just made its appearance. It is come to my hands translated into English, but I have not had time yet to read it.

I am sorry you have undergone any chagreen on acct. of the lime Stone. I have got through my Summers work without

[49] Fairlie.

any disappointment therefrom; having had it in my power at all times, when wanted, to buy Shells. nor would I wish to have any sent me now, unless by contract not to exceed One shilling and three pence at the ships side at Alexandria, or opposite to my House; and this I do not expect, as Stone lime is oftener higher at the former place.

It is unnecessary to assure you of the pleasure I should feel at seeing you at this place, whenever business or inclination may bring you to this State. Every good wish, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, is offered to you, Mrs. Knox and the Children, with every sentiment of friendship and regard, I am etc.

[MS. H. S.]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785.

Dear Sir: I have been favoured with your letter of the 25th. of November by Major Farlie.

Sincerely do I wish that the several State Societies had, or would, adopt the alterations that were recommended by the General meeting in May 1784. I then thought, and have had no cause since to change my opinion, that if the Society of the Cincinnati mean to live in peace with the rest of their fellow Citizens, they must subscribe to the Alterations which were at that time adopted.

That the jealousies of, and prejudices against this Society were carried to an unwarrantable length, I will readily grant. and that *less* than was done, *ought* to have removed the fears which had been imbibed, I am as clear in, as I am that it would not have done it; but it is a matter of little moment whether the alarm which siezed the public mind was the result of foresight, envy and jealousy, or a disordered imagination; the effect of

perseverance would have been the same: wherein there would have been found an equivalent for the seperation of Interests, which (from my best information, not from one State only but many) would inevitably have taken place?

The fears of the people are not yet removed, they only sleep, and a very little matter will set them afloat again. Had it not been for the predicament we stood in with respect to the foreign Officers, and the charitable part of the Institution I should, on that occasion, as far as my voice would have gone have endeavoured to convince the narrow minded part of our Countrymen that the Amor Pate. was much stronger in our breasts than theirs, and that our conduct through the whole of the business was actuated by nobler and more generous sentiments than were apprehended, by abolishing the Society at once, with a declaration of the causes, and the purity of its intention. But the latter may be interesting to many, and the former, is an inseperable bar to such a step.

I am sincerely concerned to find by your letter that the Baron[50] is again in straightened circumstances. I am much disinclined to ask favors of Congress, but if I knew what the objects of his wishes are I should have much pleasure in rendering him any services in my power with such members of that body as I now and then corrispond with. I had flattered myself, from what was told me some time ago, that Congress had made a final settlement with the Baron much to his satisfaction.

My Compliments and best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, are presented to Mrs. Hamilton. I am etc.

PS. When you see Genl. Schuyler and family I pray you to offer my best respects to them.[51]

[50] Baron Steuben.

[51] From the original in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

*To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, December 16, 1785.

Sir: Since I wrote you last I have received your letter of the 28th. of Novr. Although you could not make out an exact statement of the Accts., as they stand between the Tenants and me, I wish you had returned me a list of them, and the Lots on which they live, with the Rent each man pays.

I see no advantage that is to be derived *now,* from my being on the Tenemants. As you have power, and your judgment must direct, your enquiries may be extended as far as mine could, was I on the spot. Supposing this to be the case, what could I do, more than to see, in the first place, to whom Lot No. 1 (and so on with all the rest) was originally granted; in whose possession it now is; and what transferances have taken place. What rents the lot has credit for in the acct. I sent you (which is the best that could be made out?) and what receipts can be produced, in case of a difference between my accts. and the Tenants, in proof of his having paid more than he stands credited for. What, more than this, I say, could I do were I on the Land? And is not all this in your Power? The Leases which I gave you (for this purpose) testifies to the first. The Tentent [*sic*] on the land solves the second. and the information of themselves, compared, and corroborated by the testimony of the neighbourhood, if necessary, is the only means I know, of coming at the truth of the third matter. that is, the transferences. With respect to the Rents which are due on any lot, my Acct. compared with the Tenants receipts, is the only mode by which this can be ascertained. I readily grant that, my business with respect to these people have been most shamefully neglected but there is no help for that now, to recover it out of the State of disorder and confusion into which it has run, and to place it on as just a footing both for Landlord and tenant as the nature

of the case will admit of, is all that remains to be done; and some of the letters which I have already written to you on this subject, and to which I now refer, gives you my ideas *fully* on the Subject. and wch. in one word are these, to deal justly, honourably, and even generously by them; But where it shall appear that the Tenants have disregarded every Covenant in the leases, which were intended to secure a mutual benefit to myself; and their *sole* aim has been to make a Market of the Land for their own private emolument. Or where the tenant in possession has taken advantage of the times, and paid their rents in Paper money when it was of no value. In either of these cases, I should have no scruple to set the Leases aside, if they are clearly, and legally forfeited; provided, the Lots can be let to a better advantage than on the present terms, of the Leases. And all these things must be submitted to your own Judgment, after the fullest information of the circumstances, is obtained.

If the Tenants have paid money to any other than Lund Washington or myself, I should have an acct. of it; and when it was done; that I may look for it in some quarter, but where there is no receipt, nor no credit in my acct., I shall pay no regard to bear ascertions. I may quit scores at once if these are to be considered as discharges. With respect to their being two tenants on a Lot, unless they have something to shew, which authorizes it, the Lease itself must be your guide and director, without application to me. It is evidence of the agreement between the Landlord and tenant, and must be resorted to every year, to see that the terms are fulfilled on the part of the latter; for it may be laid down as a certainty that there is no obligation on the former that will not be exacted.

Lund Washington's going upon the land could answer no purpose; he knows no more how matters stand than I do, and much less I believe than yourself, or the business would not be in the confusion it is at present.

It is essentially necessary that yr. collection should be as large as possible, because, independant of other considerations, I have not made half bread Corn enough this year to serve my People and stock; and shall have to purchase it at a high price, in addition to my other heavy and numerous expenditures notwithstanding this, it is my wish to push matters to the last extremty in order to obtain all the rents which may be due, unless there is, in your opinion, good cause for it. in short, circumstances and your own discretion must direct you.

With respect to the vacant Lots I have in the Tracts committed to your Inspection and management; I can give but one general direction for them all. And that is this: let the notice that they are to be let, be as long before hand, and as extensive as you can conveniently give of the day you will let them, (to the highest bidder if you shall think it best), and then let them for as much as you can obtain, for a term not exceeding 14 years; ten years I should prefer. If the Season is now too far advanced, (and it is highly probable that few Tenants have places to look for at this late Season of the year), perhaps it might be better to rent them upon any terms for the coming year, and endeavor in time next year, to render them as advantageous to me as the Land will procure.

I think it would be best to divide the lot on Chattins run, occupied by John Thompson, and to put it on the footing wch. you have suggested. It also appears that the other Lots on the same tract, had also better be divided; they will rent much higher for it, as there are so many more people of small force wanting land than great. and when they are divided, rent them for as much as you can get. An Advertisement of these vacant Lots in the Alexa. Paper, At Dumfries, Falmouth, and Port Tobacco would, I am persuaded, (if the Season is not too far advanced) bring you tenants in abundance. for many have

applied to me, and I told them, as I really thought, that I had not an Acre of Land in those parts untenanted.

It may be well to attend a little closely to the line between some person, or persons of the name of Rector, and me on Chattins run. It is now, some years ago, since I was told, his Mill was on my Land; and that he was making some other encroachments; and was endeavouring to support a claim to it, merely because it was convenient for, and his interest to possess it.

Inclosed you have a memo. of the agreement between us, respecting the Wheat. I made a bad bargain of it. not more than 5/6 has been given at Alexandria for this Article, the market there now dull, and the price expected to fall. What Wheat of yours that has come to my Mill, the Miller says is good and I hope your orders will be fulfilled with respect to the good cleaning of that which is to come. It is all I can expect for the high price given. I am etc.

PS. Williams not coming down, the Counter part of his Lease is not signed by him. I have directed that it shall be delivered to you. This letter is written in so great a hurry, that I wish it may be understood. If you can get at my meaning it is all I wish. The opportunity for sending it being sudden and unexpected.[52]

To THE TRUSTEES OF THE ALEXANDRIA ACADEMY

December 17, 1785.

Gentlemen: That I may be perspicuous and avoid misconception, the proposition[53] which I wish to lay before you is committed to writing; and is as follows:

[52] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Lloyd W. Smith, of New York City.

[53] At the meeting of the trustees (December 17) which accepted this offer, those present were: Dr. William Brown, president; Benjamin Dulany, William Hartshorne, James Hendricks, John Fitzgerald, Samuel Hanson, and Charles Lee. Their letter of acceptance to Washington is dated Dec. 17, 1785, and is in the *Washington Papers*.

It has long been my intention to invest, at my death, one thousand pounds current money of this State in the hands of Trustees, the interest only of which to be applied in instituting a school in the Town of Alexandria, for the purpose of educating orphan children who have no other resource, or the children of such indigent parents as are unable to give it. The objects to be considered of and determined by the Trustees for the time being, when applied to by the parents or friends of the children who have pretensions to this provision. It is not in my power at this time to advance the above sum; but that a measure, that may be productive of good, may not be delayed, I will until my death, or until it shall be more convenient for my Estate to advance the principal, pay the interest thereof (to wit, fifty pounds) annually.

Under this state of the matter, I submit to your consideration the practicability and propriety of blending the two institutions together, so as to make one Seminary under the direction of the President, Visitors, or such other establishment as to you shall seem best calculated to promote the objects in view, and for preserving order, regularity, and good conduct in the Academy. My intention, as I have before intimated, is, that the principal sum shall *never* be broken in upon; the interest *only* to be applied for the purposes above mentioned. It was also my intention to apply the latter to the *sole* purpose of education, and of that kind of education which would be most extensively useful to people of the lower class of citizens, viz. reading, writing and arithmetic, so as to fit them for mechanical purposes.

The fund, if confined to this, would comprehend more subjects; but, if you shall be of opinion, that the proposition I now offer can be made to comport with the institution of the School which is already established; and approve of an incorporation of them in the manner before mentioned, and thereafter, upon

a full consideration of the matter, should conceive that this fund would be more advantageously applied towards cloathing and schooling, than solely to the latter, I will acquiesce in it most cheerfully; and shall be ready, (as soon as the Trustees are established upon a permanent footing,) by Deed or other instrument of writing, to vest the aforesaid sum of One thousand pounds, in them and their successors forever, with powers to direct and manage the same agreeably to these my declared intentions.[54]

*To NOAH WEBSTER

Mount Vernon, December 18, 1785.

Sir: Your letter of the 16th., with others, were put into my hands yesterday in Alexandria; but being engaged at that time I did not open them until I returned home in the evening; or, I would have sought an opportunity of conversing with you on the subject of it, whilst I was in Town.

On the footing you have placed your offer, though I feel myself obliged by it, I am unable, from the indecision of it, to return a satisfactory answer. It would by no means suit me to await the determinations of the Assemblies of those States (which are mentioned in your letter) on the applications you are about to make to them; and *afterwards*, a consultation of circumstances and your convenience, before you could resolve on what plan to fix. Nor indeed, does your offer go to more than *one* point, whilst I have *three* objects in view, namely: the education of the Children, Aiding me in my corrispondencies, and keeping my Accounts: The last of which, I believe might be dispensed with; or, at any rate when they are once digested, and brought into order (which is the present employment of

[54] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Mr. Shaw) they will require very little attention; but the other two are essential to my purposes.

I send you the sketches of American policy,[55] and conceive that the publication of extracts therefrom will be pleasing, and may be beneficial. All possible lights ought, in my opinion, to be thrown on subjects of this importance, for it should seem that ignorance, or design, have too great a share in the government of public measures. I am etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

To BENJAMIN HARRISON

Mount Vernon, December 18, 1785.

My Dr. Sir: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 7th. inst: enclosing an Act of the General Assembly, which passed at my request.[56]

This new proof of the confidence repos'd in me by my Country, lays me under additional obligations to it; and I am equally sensible of its favors, and the polite and friendly wishes with which you accompanied the act.

If the etiquette of business makes it necessary for me officially to acknowledge the receipt of this Act, let me entreat you my Dr. Sir, to offer to the House in my behalf but in your own words, the grateful sense I have of its goodness upon this occasion, with assurances that the confidence reposed in me, shall not intentionally be abused. With great esteem, etc.

PASS FOR PEDRO TELLEZ

December 19, 1785.

The Bearer of this Pedro Tellez, is the Spaniard who was sent from Bilboa in Spain, with one of the Jack Asses which

[55] Webster's "Sketches of American Policy" was printed as a pamphlet in 1785.

[56] Act of Oct. 17, 1785, permitting Washington to dispose of the donated stock of the Potomac and James Rivers navigation companies, as he so requested.

was presented to me by His Catholic Majesty, and is on his journey to New York, to the Minister of Spain, with a view of returning to his own Country from thence.[57]

Not being able to speak any other language than that of his native tongue, it is requested as a favor of the good people on the road to assist and direct him properly, which will be considered as an obligation conferred on, G: Washington[58]

*To COUNT FLORIDA BLANCA

Virginia, December 19, 1785.

Sir: My homage is due to his Catholic Majesty for the honor of his present. The value of it is intrinsically great, but is rendered inestimable by the manner and from the hand it is derived.

Let me entreat you therefore, Sir, to lay before the King my thanks for the Jack Asses with which he has been graciously pleased to compliment me; and to assure his Majesty of my unbounded gratitude for so condescending a mark of his royal notice and favor.

That long life, perfect health, and unfading glory may attend his Majesty's reign, is my fervent wish. With great respect and consideration I have the honor etc.[59]

To FRANCISCO RENDON

Mount Vernon, December 19, 1785.

Sir: This letter will be handed to you by Mr. Peter Tellez who attended the Jack Ass, which arrived safe, to this place:

[57] A certificate also was furnished Tellez (December 19) that he had delivered one jackass and that his care and attention to the valuable animal was most acceptable. A copy of this certificate is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[59] From a photostat of the letter sent which is in *Archivo Historico Nacional* Madrid, *Estado,* Legajo 3885, *Expediente* 26.

for want of an Interpreter I have not been able to understand him perfectly; but as far as his wishes have been explained to me, they are, that he may be permitted to return to Spain as soon as possible; that it is proper he should go by the way of New York to see his Excellency Don Gardoqui; that as he was employed by his Catholic Majesty, and in the Kings pay until he return'd (his wife receiving part of it from Mr. Gardoqui at Bilboa) he would take none from me.

Under these circumstances I have forwarded him to Nw. York, after prevailing on him to take a trifle as an acknowledgment of the obligation I am under to him, for his care of the animal on which I set the highest value. He has some expectation indeed, that at his return his Majesty may bestow some humble appointment on him, in the Collection of his Customs; and therein he has my wishes, but I could not ask it for him, or even hint it to the Minister.

Not having the honor of an acquaintance with his Excelly. Mr. Gardoqui, I have taken the liberty of making these communications to you; and to pray, if there is anything improper in my sending Mr. Tellez to Nw. York, or in my conduct towards him, that it may be ascribed to misconception, and misunderstanding his wants by bad interpretation. Altho' unknown, I pray you to make a tender of my respectful compliments to Mr. Gardoqui, and to accompany them with the strongest assurances of the pleasure I should feel in seeing him at this Seat of my retirement, if inclination should ever induce him to visit the States to the southward of Nw. York. It is unnecessary to offer you the same assurances, because I have repeatedly done it before, and you must have been convinced of my sincerity. With very great esteem etc.

P. S. Mr. Tellez is charged with a Letter from me to Mr. Carmichael, enclosing one to His Exy. the Count de Florida

Blanca, praying that my homage and gratitude may be presented to his Catholic Majesty for the favor he has conferred on me for the honor of his royal notice.[60]

To WILLIAM CARMICHAEL

Mount Vernon, December 19, 1785.

Sir: One the Jacks with which his Catholic Majesty was pleased to present me, has arrived safe; and the enclos'd to his Minister is a testimony of my gratitude for the singular mark of his royal notice. I pray you Sir, to do me the honor of presenting it. I hesitate a while, whether to express my sense of this obligation at first, or second hand; but considering the value of it, I determined on the former, and at the same time that I would enclose you a copy of what I had written.

The Spaniard, Seignor Pedro Tellez who accompanied the Jack which arrived safe, has expressed a wish to obtain a line of approbation from me; by means of which he thinks he could obtain some low office in the King's Customs: but it was a liberty I could not take, further than to express in the Certificate I have given him, my sense of his care of the animal which was entrusted to him. But if a word my good Sir, could occasionally drop from you to this effect, it might do an essential service to the poor fellow (who it seems has a wife and children) and would be considered as an additional favor conferred on, Sir Yrs. etc.[60]

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: From the assurances you gave me I had flattered myself that I should 'ere this have received a payment from you;

[60] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

and I had no doubt of it after Colo. Fitzgerald informed me, five months ago that £200 had passed thro' his hands from Mr. White to you; which was the fund, if I understood you rightly, which you had appropriated for this purpose.

I beg you to be assured that the disclosure I made to you of my circumstances was candid; and that it cannot be more disagreeable to you to hear, than it is to me to repeat that my wants are pressing, some debts which I am really ashamed to owe, are unpaid; and I have been, for want of money, unable to do more with my manufacturing Mill, (which is expensive to me without) than to grind up my own Crops; for wheat is not to be bought on credit, and I have not cash to pay for it. But this is not the worst, I have not made half grain enough to support my people and stock this year, the deficiency must be bought at a high price, and (for there is no question of the Articles bearing it) for ready money. I must therefore get it at an advanced price, if to be had at all, on credit; or I must sell something at a low price to enable me to pay ready money. This is truly my situation. I am, etc.[61]

To LUND WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Dr. Lund: Having come to a fixed determination (whatever else may be left undone) to attend to the business of my plantations; and having enquired of Geo: Washington[62] how far it would be agreeable to him and his wife to make this place a permanent residence, (for before it was only considered as their temporary abode, until some plan could be settled for them) and finding it to comport with their inclinations, I now inform you that it will be in my power to comply with your

[61] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[62] George Augustine Washington.

wishes with less inconvenience than appeared when you first proposed to leave my employment.

The business of the Mill is what both of us, will be most at a loss about at first; and as the people wanting flour are in the habit of applying to you for it, it would be rendering me a service to give your attention to this matter, until he can become a little acquainted with the mode of managing it; and your advice to him afterwards in this and other affairs may be useful.

The mode of paying the taxes, the times of collection, and in what kind of property it is most advantageous to discharge them, and the amount of them, is another business in which he will be to seek; and I have not sufficient knowledge of the practice to instruct him.

Nothing else occurs to me at this time in which it is essential to give you any trouble after the present year; for if I should not be able to visit the plantations as often as I could wish, (owing to company or other engagements) I am resolved that an account of the stock and every occurrence that happens in the course of the week shall be minutely detailed to me every saturday. Matters cannot go much out of sorts in that time without a seasonable remedy. For both our interests, the wheat remaining in the straw should be an object of your care. I am, etc.[63]

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Mount Vernon, December 20, 1785.

Dr. Sir: It so happened that your letter of the 4th. ulto. with its enclosures, did not meet a quick passage to me; and that some delays afterwards, more the effect of accident than neglect, prevented the Petition and Bill,[64] (which you are so oblig-

[63] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[64] Of the Potomac Company.

ing as to draw) from getting to the Assemblies of the two States, so soon as were to be wished; however they are now before them; and from that of Maryland, I am inform'd by a gentleman to whom I had written on the occasion, that the business could meet with no opposition there; and from that of this State that it was reported reasonable. Acts it is to be hoped, will therefore pass, conformably to our desires.

I feel myself much obliged by the calculations you have been at the trouble to make and to transmit to me; and at all times shall be happy in a full and unreserved communication of your sentiments on this, or any other business. This in particular in a new work stands in need of all the information we can obtain, and is much indebted to you for many estimates, and ideas which have been very useful.

It is to be apprehended, notwithstanding the great encouragements which have been offered by the Directors of the Company for the hire of negroes, that we shall not succeed in obtaining them. An idea is entertained by the proprietors of them, that the nature of the work will expose them to dangers which are not compensated by the terms. Servants I hope are purchased 'ere this; Colo. Fitzgerald was to have gone yesterday to George town for this purpose. If the appearance of the people is at all favorable, the price at which Colo. Deakens offers them will be no obstacle.

This letter, handed to the care of Colo. Deakens, will be accompanied by a small bag of Spanish Chestnutts, half of which you will please to accept, and the other contrive to Mr. Lee; they were sent to the Alexandria races in October to be given to him, but the delivery was neglected. It might be well perhaps to put them in sand to prevent an over drying, to the injury of vegitation. With very great esteem, etc.[65]

[65] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, December 24, 1785.

Dr. Sir: I have received your favor of the 18th., and am exceedingly obliged to you for the Contract you have entered into on my behalf, with Mr. Savage,[66] for 800 bushels of oats. If you can extend the quantity to be had from him, to 1200 bushels in the whole, upon the same terms, it would add greatly to the favor as my crop of Corn is much worse than I had conceived it to be when I wrote to you last (not having received the tallies) which together do not amount to one third of what I made last year; which is insufficient to feed my negroes, much more to afford support for my Horses. This evinces the necessity also of my knowing speedily and precisely, if I may depend upon any from the Estate below, and the quantity.

The Eastern shore oats generally speaking, are light and indifferent; and what is worse, are often mixed with the wild onions: as I mean to sow oats next Spring to help me along, it would be obliging in Mr. Savage, if he could send me such as are free from this troublesome, and injurious plant to our fields.

I thank you too for the information respecting the interest of the loans to the Continent in this State: I send what Certificates I possess, to you; but fear that those who live at a distance from the Theatre, have little chance of being benefited by the Act of the Legislature; although they may get their Certificates to the Treasury on or before the time limited. but if I should be mistaken in this, you would serve me essentially by bringing Cash in exchange for those which are enclosed, agreeably to the list which accompanies them. With great esteem, etc.[76]

[66] George Savage, of Northampton County, Va.

[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, December 27, 1785.

Dr. Sir: In looking over the list of premiums proposed by the Agricultural Society of Philada., I perceive that those offered for the 2d. 3d. and 4th. articles, were to have been produced according to the requisin. by the 20th. inst:

Each of these being interesting to a farmer you would oblige me much therefore by giving me the result of the communications on these heads to the Society, if any discoveries worth notice have been handed to it.

Mrs. Washington joins me in offering the compliments of the season to Mrs. Powel and yourself, and in best wishes that you may see many returns of it. With great esteem, etc.[68]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, January 5, 1786.

Sir: A few days ago a Mr. Isaac Jenny of Loudon County was with me respecting a Piece of Land, which he Supposing was Vacant had been endeavouring to obtain, but which upon investigation, he finds belongs to me, and in part of my Chattins Run tract, (adjoining Robt. Ashbys), though Claimed by Mr. Robt. Scott, who has Placed a tenant thereon (One Jesse Hite) whose first years Rent is now due. As far as I can understand the matter, the following is a true State of the case;

Both Scott and I bind upon Burgess's Patent, and call for his Lines. One of which it Should seem, runs a Certain Course and Distance, and Calls for a Red Oak; but in Place of a Red Oak, there is a White Oak, which Mr. Jenny says all the Neighbours know to be Burgess's Corner, and he is informed that the Surveyor of the County has established it as such. From hence I

[68] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Run Two or Three Short Courses with Burgess's lines to a Red Oak. And from thence a line with Scott; But Scott wants, and it Should Seem (from Mr. Jenny's Account) actually got Ashby when he was laying my Land off into Lotts, to leave out those Short courses above mentioned, by which is a line of Blazed Trees, which were then, or at Some other time, made to Subserve the Purpose; I am Cut out of 170 or 180 Acres of Land, which are within the lines of my Patent, and now Tenanted by Scott, to Hite. Inclosed I Send you a copy of the Courses and Boundaries of my Land, taken from the Original Patents and Pray the first time you go into the Neighbourhood, that you would have the matter enquired into. I have no objection to Hite's having the Land, and would give him the Preference, but Shall not by any means (If the Land is mine) think myself bound to fulfill Scott's agreement with him. He must (except in the Preference above) Stand upon the Same footing with me, as another Man.

Sometime ago Mr. Landon Carter informed me that a Patent of which he is Possessed takes away part of my Tract in Ashby's Bent. I replyed that I wanted no Land but my own, nor to go into a Litigation of the right. If it was realy his. But this Right must be clearly ascertained before I shall Surrender the land: which I mention that if upon enquiry you find he has taken possession of any part of what I hold by Purchase there, and which I laid out into lots, I may be informed thereof, and to prevent his doing it, if it remains to be done. Be so good as to inform me by the first conveyance, whether Clover Seed, is to be bought in your Neighbourhood, and if so the quantity and Place of it. On your answer will depend my Purchase with you, or at Philadelphia. I have great reason to fear, that that which you bought for me last year was good for nothing. If so, and the Man of whom you got it, was apprized thereof, I Shall view him in a light infinitely worse than a pick pocket, because

the latter only takes your Money, whilst the former does this also, runs you to a useless cost, of Putting land in fine Tilth, for the Seed, and occasions the loss of a year in ones Projects.

I have heard nothing more of the Butter, which you were to have lodg'd at Mr. Wayles's by the 23d. of last Month, I hope no disappointment will take Place, now especially as I Could after I had engaged this of you, have Purchased any quantity, of very fine Butter in Alexandria, at 9d. p lb. having obtained 200 lbs. at that Price. I am etc.[69]

*To TENCH TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, January 7, 1786.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 30th. Ulto. did not reach me until last night. Except it is by chance, letters by the Stage never get to my hands so quickly as they do by the Post; nor so safely, because I send regularly every post day to the Office in Alexandria, whilst those by the Stage getting into private hands await accidental conveyances from that place. I mention this circumstance as a reply might have been expected from me sooner.

As it is convenient and indeed essential to me, to have the use of my unfinished room as soon as may be, I agree to Mr. Rawlins's terms (as stated in your letter) in all their parts; not but that I am convinced from what I know of the business (being once part owner of as accomplished a workman as ever came to this Country, in that way, and the manner of its execution) that Mr. Rawlins has imposed upon Mr. Gough and now avails himself of the scarcity of Artisans of his profession, to extort high

[69] In the writing of William Shaw. This letter is inadvertently entered as Jan. 5, 1785, in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On January 5 Washington entered into articles of agreement with Thomas Green to serve [as a carpenter] for one year. This agreement, in Washington's writing, is in the *Washington Papers*.

terms from me. Most of this work is cast, and is as quickly done as lead is run into a mould. But rather than encounter further delay, perhaps a disappointment, or ask the favor of a stranger to engage an undertaker to cross the Atlantic who might be troublesome to me thereafter, I submit to this imposition as the lesser evil.

As Mr. Rawlins is a stranger to me, and one, of whose character I have not the smallest knowledge; and as I have had some reason to remember an old adage, that one of the bad paymasters is him that pays before hand, I persuade myself that you will be satisfied I shall run no risk in advancing him money to the amount of £50 in the course of the winter, 'ere it is done. And as you are so obliging as to offer to do this, your drafts on me for such advances as you make him, shall be punctually paid.

When the agreement is specifically entered into, and bound, be so good as to request Mr. Rawlins to point out the preparative steps for me, that no delays may follow his arrival. I shall rely more upon your friendship and goodness, than upon any apology I could make, for an excuse for the trouble this business has already give you, and is likely to give, you before its finally accomplishment; and can only assure you that with unfeigned esteem and Affection I am, etc.

P. S. I send this letter to Alexa. to take the chance of a private conveyance, but it is probable the Post will offer the first.

To CATHERINE MACAULAY GRAHAM

Mount Vernon, January 10, 1786.

Madam: I wish my expression would do justice to my feelings, that I might convey to you adequate ideas of my gratitudes for those favourable sentiments with which the letter you did me the honor to write to me from New York, is replete. The plaudit of a lady so celebrated as Mrs. Macauly Graham

is, could not fail of making a deep impression upon my sensibility; and my pride was more than a little flattered by your approbation of my conduct thro' an arduous and painful contest.

During the time in which we supposed you to have been on your journey to New York, we participated in the distresses which we were sure you must have been involved in on account of the intemperature of the air, which exceeded the heats common in this Country at the most inclement season: and tho' your letter was expressive of the great fatigue you had undergone, still we rejoiced that the journey was attended with no worse consequences.

I hope, and most sincerely wish that this letter may find you happily restored to your friends in England, whose anxiety for your return must, I am persuaded, have been great; and that you will have experienced no inconvenience from your voyage to America.

Mrs. Washington who has a grateful sense of your favorable mention of her; and Fanny Bassett and Major Washington who, since we had the honor of your company, have joined their hands and fortunes, unite with me in respectful compliments to you; and in every good wish that can render you and Mr. Graham happy. The little folks enjoy perfect health. The boy, whom you would readily have perceived, was the pet of the family, gives promising hopes from maturer age.

With sentiments of great respect and esteem, I have the honor, etc.[70]

To JAMES MERCER

Mount Vernon, January 20, 1786.

Dr. Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 10th. inst: with its inclosures, the last are returned signed. I also

[70] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

send you a copy of the courses of the Lotts purchased by yourself and me at the sale of your brother's Land, and shall thank you for the conveyances which are necessary to secure the legal right to those which I hold.

I am sorry to hear that you still continue indisposed, you have my best wishes for a speedy and perfect recovery of your health, and with sentimts. of sincere esteem etc.

P. S. A few days ago I received under cover, several copies of the inclosed proposals[71] from the Author; one of which has obtained a good many subscribers in Alexa. I use the freedom of sending a copy to you, that in case yourself and friends in and about Fredericksburgh should incline to become subscribers to the work, an opportunity may be furnished. As the Doctr.,[72] it is to be presumed, will look to me for a return of the number committed to my charge, I shall be glad to receive the enclosed when you shall find it convenient and proper, so as to be ready for his call. I have only to pray that the conditions may be complied with respecting the advance, as I would not incline to have any thing more to do in the business, after the subscription papers are returned.[73]

To DIEGO DE GARDOQUI

Mount Vernon, January 20, 1786.

Sir: The letter which your Excellency did me the favor to write to me on the first of this month does me great honor: the sentiments which you have been pleased to entertain of my conduct are very flattering; and the friendly manner in which they are expressed is highly pleasing. They meet the approbation

[71] No subscription proposals for Gordon's "History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America" are now found in the *Washington Papers*. The work, in 4 volumes, first appeared in London in 1788.

[72] Rev. William Gordon.

[73] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

of a gentleman whose good wishes were early engaged in the American cause, and who has attended to its progress thro' the various stages of the revolution, must be considered as a happy circumstance for me; and I shall seek occasionally to testify my sense of it.

With much truth, I repeat the assurances offered to your Excellency thro' Mr. Rendon, of the pleasure I should have in seeing you at my Seat in this State, that I might express personally to you, how sensibly I feel for the proposed honor of your correspondence, and pray you to offer in such terms as you know would be most acceptable and proper, my gratitude to His Catholic Majesty, for his royal present to me, than which nothing could have been more flattering or valuable.

With much esteem, respect and consideration, I have the honor, etc.[74]

*To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, January 30, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The letter which you dropped for me at Alexandria I have received. If you can make it convenient to lodge the money in the hands of any person at that place, it would oblige me. I lie quite out of the line of opportunities to Annapolis, and to send there on purpose, would cost me 2½, or perhaps 5 pr Ct. to fetch it.

If Mr. Pine, the Portrait Painter, should still be at Annapolis (which is scarcely to be expected) you would oblige me by paying him Twenty Guineas, and Sixteen dollars; and his receipt for these sums, will be equal to that much of the £200 promised me. If he should have left Annapolis, I will remit the money to him myself.

[74] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments to Mrs. Mercer. We shall always be glad to see you both at this place on your rout to or from Annapolis. My best respects attend Mr. Spriggs [75] family. I am etc. [H.S.P.]

To JAMES RUMSEY

Mount Vernon, January 31, 1786.

Sir: If you have no cause to change your opinion respecting your mechanical Boat, and reasons unknown to me do not exist to delay the exhibition of it, I would advise you to give it to the public as soon as it can be prepared, conveniently. The postponement creates distrust in the public mind; it gives time also for the imagination to work, and this is assisted by a little dropping from one, and something from another, to whom you have disclosed the secret: should therefore a mechanical genius hit upon your plan, or something similar to it, I need not add that it would place you in an awkward situation, and perhaps disconcert all your prospects concerning this useful discovery; for you are not, with your experience in life, now to learn that the shoulders of the public are too broad to feel the weight of the complaints of an individual, or to regard promises, if they find it convenient, and have the shadow of plausibility on their side, to retract them. I will inform you further, that many people in guessing at your plan, have come very near the mark; and that one, who had something of a similar nature to offer to the public, wanted a Certificate from me that it was different from yours. I told him, that as I was not at liberty to declare what your plan was, so I did not think it proper to say what it was not.

[75] Richard Sprigg.

Whatever may be your determination after this hint, I have only to request that my sentiments on the subject may be ascribed to friendly motives, and taken in good part.

I should be glad to know the exact state in which my houses at Bath are. I have fifty pounds ready, for which you may draw on me at any time; and I will settle for the whole as soon as possible.

Herewith you will receive a Magazine containing the estimates of the expence of the Canal in Scotland. It belongs to Mr. Johnson who requested me to forward it to you after I had read it, to him you will be pleased to return the book when you are done with it. With esteem, etc.[76]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, February 4, 1786.

Sir: My last by Mr. Daniel McPherson would inform you why I did not write more fully by *that* opportunity; and my attendance since on the business of the Potomac Company at the Great Falls, is the reason of the delay in doing it until now.

Your letters, of the 10th. of Decr. and of the 12th. 17th. and 18th. of last month are before me, and such parts of them as have not been answered and appear to require it, shall be the subjects of this letter; taking them in the order of their dates.

The Butter is at length arrived, and as I had depended upon it, I shall keep the whole tho' the price is at least 2d. pr. Ct. more than I was supplied with very good for, at Alexandria in the fall. Where there is an evidence of exertion in the Tenants to pay rents and arrearages, I think you act very properly by giving them encouraging words, and assurances of indulgence:

[76] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

distress to them, and little advantage to me, would accrue from a contrary conduct. But where it shall appear that there is no such intention; that to postpone payment is the sole aim; and where the conditions of the Leases have been unattended to by them, and their only object has been to carry the land, and not the produce of it to market, here, no favor is due.

Abner Grigg has never appeared here, if he comes, I shall not forget your information respecting him. In the meanwhile let me observe, that it is the compliance or non-compliance with the Lease which is to determine his right to return. If he is warranted by the tenor of the lease to do so, I shall not dispute the point with him; but watch his ways well in future without granting him any endulgences; if he is not, then take the speediest and most effectual mode to get rid of him. For your exertions in following and catching him, I feel myself obliged to you; as I also do for your endeavours to rent the vacant Lotts, altho' they should not be crowned with success.

I hope you will be more fortunate in your collection than your letter of the 12th. seems to indicate, as it is on this I much depend for the payment of your wheat. It was unquestionably, my intention that Mr. Airess should pay the taxes of the Tenement he holds; as an evidence of it every Lott let at, and since that time, have been so expressed in the Leases: but whether it was declared in explicit terms, or even by implication to him at the time, my memory does not now serve me, and therefore I will not insist upon anything I am not clear in. The term for which he is to hold it, I recollect well is for his own and his wifes life, and must be so filled.

As I have only Mr. Jenny's Accot. of the interference of lines; and as Surveyors fees (as established by Law) are high, perhaps it might be as well in the first instance to get the line between

Mr. Scott and me run by any accurate man you can hire as the Surveyor of the County, and hear what he (Mr. Scott) has to say upon the subject. I want nothing but justice, and that, if to be obtained, I will have. But if, upon the whole, you find the business cannot be so well done by any other as the Surveyor of the County, I consent very readily to your employing him.

Having every reason to believe that the clover seed which you sent me last fall was bad, I can by no means think of taking more of it. If my fears of its not vegitating should be realized, I would rather have given £50, for a bushl. of good seed, than encounter the disappointment and loss of time will be consequent of it. I will not absolutely pronounce it bad, 'till the Spring vegitation comes on; but I have all the reason imaginable to dread it. The seed had from Philadela. is not imported, but the growth of the Country and cheaper than Mr. Ropers; but cheapness was not the point I aimed at, certainty was my mark, and if I have missed it, I have lost a season and my labour.

Your letter of the 18th. was accompanied with a statement of the Tenements and rents of my Land in Fauquier &c. for which I am obliged to you. That you will have trouble in reducing these matters to order, I have not, nor ever had any doubt of, but they will be plain and easy after this year, which will make amends; as I am determined to continue the collection in the hands of an agent who by close attention will see that I have justice done me, not only in the punctual payment of the rents, but that the covenants thereof are duly attended to and complied with.

What reply to make to that part of your letter, wherein you speak of difficulties which may arise in case of the death of either of us, in the settlement of Accots., I know not: you have

powers to act, and instructions how to act; and I here declare that if neither of these will comprehend all the cases which may arise in the prosecution of this business, my desire is that you would act for me as you would do for yourself: there can be no difficulty then, which I can foresee in the case; for these powers, these instructions and declaration will always justify a conduct that is not evidently fraudulent; of wch. there is not the smallest suspicion in the present case. But when time will admit of it, state the cases fully wherein directions are wanted, and my sentiments thereon shall be handed to you, this will be a further justification for your conduct.

Inclosed you have copies of the Accots. handed in by Lewis Lamont and his widow, together with copies of the Sheriff's receipts, which convey every information that is in my power to give you respecting his collection. I am, etc.[77]

*To DAVID STUART

Mount Vernon, February 5, 1786.

Dear Sir: The Vessel which brought the inclosed, has delivered the 800 Bushels of Oats for which you contracted with Mr Savage. Besides these, I have taken 100 more; for which I am to pay Flour. L Washington has taken anothr. and the remaining 200 hundred are taken to Alexandria for you.

I have engaged this man to bring the Corn from York River. He expects to stay no longer than Monday (tomorrow) at Alexandria; if you propose therefore to send wheat fans by him to the Plantations below you have no time to loose in getting them on board. I hope Mrs. Stuart, to whom and yourself I offer congratulations on the encrease of your family, is quite recovered. With great esteem and regard I am etc.

[77] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Mrs. Washington presents her love to Mrs. Stuart and wishes to know how she is.[78]

*To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, February 6, 1786.

My dear Sir: Your favour of the 4th. of Jany. never reached me till yesterday, or the receipt of it should have had an earlier acknowledgment. Let me in the first place thank you for your kind attention to my enquiries. And in the next, pray you to learn, precisely from Mr. Lear, upon what terms he would come to me; for I am not inclined to leave matters of this sort to after discussion, or mis-conception. Whatever agreement is previously made, shall be pointedly fulfilled on my part, wch. will prevent every cause of complaint on his.

Mr. Lear,[79] or any other who may come into my family in the blended characters of preceptor to the Children, and as a Clerk or private Secretary to me, will sit at my Table, will live as I live, will mix with the Company which resort to the Ho., and will be treated in every respect with civility, and proper attention. He will have his washing done in the family, and may have his linnen and Stockings mended by the maids of it. The duties which will be required of him are, generally, such as appertain to the offices before mentioned. The first will be very trifling 'till the Children are a little more advanced; and the latter will be equally so as my corrispondencies decline (which I am endeavouring to effect); and after my accts; and other old matters are brought up. To descend more minutely into his avocations I am unable, because occasional matters may require

[78] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

[79] Tobias Lear, of Portsmouth, N. H. He was employed by Washington as a secretary.

particular Services; nothing however derogatory will be asked, or expected. After this explanation of my wants, I request Mr. Lear would mention the annual sum he will expect for these Services, and I will give him a decided answer by the return of the Stages, which now carry the Mail and travel quick. A good hand, as well as proper diction would be a recommendation; on acct. of fair entries; and for the benefit of the Children, who will have to copy after it.

The discovery of extracting fresh water from Salt Water, by a simple process, and without the aid of fire, will be of amazing importance to the Sons of Neptune; if it is not viciated, or rendered nauseous by the operation; but can be made to answer all the valuable purposes of other fresh water, at Sea. Every maritime power in the world, in this case, ought, in my opinion, to offer some acknowledgment to the Inventor. With sentiments of great regard and friendship I am etc.[80]

To WILLIAM LYLES & CO.[81]

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1786.

Gentn: I have received your favor of yesterday, and thank you for your ready compliance with my request. As soon as my Boat returns from Alexandria, I will immediately dispatch it with 25 barrels of superfine flour for your vessel, for the purpose of procuring if possible a she Ass, for my benefit, at Surinam.[82]

I should be glad to know whether you commit the negotiation of your own business to the Captain, or consign it to a

[80] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

[81] Merchants of Alexandria, Va.

[82] Dutch Guiana, South America.

Merchant of that place, that I may entrust mine to the same person; and as I shall have to write to the gentleman, would wish in the one case or the other to know the name and address of the Consignee.

If I should not succeed in procuring the Ass; I will, if equally agreeable to you, abide the sale of the flour at Surinam, and receive the amount in Rum, Molasses or such other articles as come well from that place, advice of which I would thank you for; but if this should interfere in the *smallest degree* with your freight, it will be perfectly agreeable to me to have the returns in cash. I am, etc.[83]

To GEORGE SAVAGE

Mount Vernon, February 8, 1786.

Sir: Your skipper, Mr. Jno. Whitney, has delivered me eight hundred bushels of oats, agreeably to the Contract made with Doctr. Stuart in my behalf. They are good and clean, for which I thank you.

Mr. Whitney informing me that he was authorized to provide a freight for the Schooner he is in, I have engaged him positively, to bring me eight hundred bushels of Indian corn from the plantations of the deceased Mr. Custis on Pamunky river. I hope it is to be had at the lowest plantation (a few miles above West Point), but of this I am not certain. I am to pay him six pence a bushel freight, delivered at my landing.

I expect no delay or disappointment will take place in this contract, as I have had the offer of two other vessels on the same terms, and have rejected them on account of this engagement. I am, etc.[83]

[83] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM LYLES & CO.

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Gentn: As it is my wish to obtain a she Ass of the first kind, and think it is more in the power of a resident at Surinam, than it can be in that of the Captn. to procure such an one, I have written the enclosed letter to Mr. Branden requesting him to make the purchase accordingly. I hope the Captn. will ascribe this preference to no other cause than the one assigned; at the same time that I earnestly request his particular attention to the animal, if one should be shipped on my account.

In case of the failure in such purchase, I have requested Mr. Branden to send the proceeds of the sales of the flour, in Molasses and Coffee. You would oblige me by having the flour inspected, properly marked for Mr. Branden, and the bill of lading therefor put under cover with my letter to that Gentn., as it will save time and trouble. I am, etc.[84]

To SAMUEL BRANDEN

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Sir: I have lately received from Spain, a Jack Ass of the first race in the Kingdom, and am very desirous of availing myself of his breed. Hearing that she Asses of good appearance are to be had at Surinam, I take the liberty of asking your assistance to procure me one of the best kind; to be sent by the return of Captain Bartlett, who will deliver this letter to you.

Neither the Captn., or any body else with whom I have had opportunities of conversing, could tell me the cost of one of these animals at Surinam; but have supposed that twenty five barrels of superfine flour, would be adequate to the purchase. This quantity (equal I believe in quality to any made in this

[84] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Country) I have the honor of shipping to your address: but if it should prove inadequate, the deficiency shall be made up in the way most agreeable to yourself. All I pray is, that I may receive one of the largest and best she Asses that can be obtained in your Country fit to breed from.

As the Captain is commissioned to purchase a She Ass for his owners, I should be glad, if the Bill of lading for mine (if one is sent to me) may be minutely descriptive of her. I hope every provision will be made for the accommodation and support of her on ship board: but if contrary to my wishes, and a disappointment happens, I request in that case that you would be so obliging as to send me in return for the flour, two hogsheads of Molasses, and the remainder in the best Coffee of your Country.

If, in this request, I have used an unwarrantable freedom, it proceeds from the good character given of you to me, by Messrs. Fitzgerald and Lyles of Alexandria, by whose vessel I write and who have offered me a passage for the animal. I am, etc.[85]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, February 10, 1786.

Dear Sir: A hasty letter which I wrote to you by Colo. Grayson, was accompanied with ten half Johans.; the application of which I informed you shd. be directed in a subsequent letter.[86] Let me now request the favour of you to send me the following articles if to be had.

A pair of Boots, and two pair of Shoes, to be made by Mr. Star (who has my measure) agreeably to the enclosed Memo.

[85] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[86] This letter was dated Jan. 30, 1786. It was very brief and stated that "when I have more leizure to write" he would be "able to mention the purposes for which they [the ten half Johannes] are intended." This letter is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Young's Six Months tour through England (his tour thro' Ireld. I have).

The Gentleman Farmer, by Henry Home.

Tulls Husbandry. All to be neatly bound and lettered.

200 Weight of Clover seed; to be fresh and good.

12 lbs. of Saint foin seed
6 lbs. of the field Burnet } if to be had good.

A Common Hunting horn of the largest and best sort.

It will readily occur to you, my good Sir, that these Seeds (as they are to be sown this Spring) cannot be forwarded too soon. I ought indeed to have wrote for them at an earlier period, but they may yet arrive at a proper Season if they are quickly dispatched. At any rate, inform me if they are to be had, and the prospect there is of forwarding them, for thereon will depend my preparation of the ground.

The Gazettes which were furnished by Mr. Dunlap, for my use, during my Military appointment, ought, undoubtedly be paid for by the public; and I had no doubt but that this had been done, regularly, by the Qr Mr General or his assistt. in the State of Pensylvania. If the case is otherwise, I am ready to give my aid towards his obtaining it. My respects to Mrs. Biddle. I am, etc.

I pray you to be pointed with respt. to the goodness of the Seeds: an imposition of bad seed is a robbery of the worst kind; for your pocket not only suffers by it but your preparations are lost, and a season passes away unimproved. [H.S.P.]

To WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, February 20, 1786.

Sir: I ought to have acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 10th. sooner, tho' I am at a loss what answer to give it now.

When I sent to Boston for my Jack Ass, which was previous to the presentation of Captn. Pearce's order, tho' subsequent to the date of it, I requested Mr. Cushing (the Lieut: Governor) to whose care this animal was addressed, to pay all the charges which had accrued for freight and other accidental expences attending the importation of him, and to draw upon me for the amount. In consequence, I have answered a Draft, to Mr. Taylor of your town, for 300 Dollars; and was informed by Mr. Cushing, by letter of equal date with the Draft, that he had not at that time been able to obtain Captn. Pearce's Accot., but that it should be transmitted as soon as the matter could be settled with him. In this way the thing has lain ever since; Post after Post I have been looking for some further advice respecting this business, but hitherto in vain. I am ready at any moment to answer Captn. Pearce's demand, when it is properly ascertained (if it has not been already paid), but it would be inconvenient for me to advance the money twice: of this, I think both Mr. Shaw and L. Washington were requested some time ago to inform you, for if the 300 Dollars has not, in part, been appropriated to the payment of Captn. Pearce's demand, I know not for what purpose the order was drawn upon me. All the other charges did not amount to more than one third of that sum.

I depended so much upon others to enquire into the usual freight of a horse from London to this Country, as not, hitherto, to have taken any steps myself, to obtain information; and it is to be feared none has been taken either by Mr. Shaw or L. W., nor do I know at this moment where to direct my enquiries.

I am thankful for your attention to my request respecting the Buck Wheat and Flax seeds, and shall be glad to know when they arrive, as I wish to secure all my Seeds for Spring sowing, in time. I am, etc.[87]

[87] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To ROBERT TOWNSEND HOOE

Mount Vernon, February 21, 1786.

Sir: Your Letter of the 17th. did not get to my hands 'till yesterday, or it should have received an earlier acknowledgment.

Mr. Herbert either mistook me, or Messrs. Valk, Berger and Schouter have misunderstood him: for acquainting the former that a company of which I am a member, was desirous of my employing a number of hands to drain the great Dismal Swamp near Norfolk, and that I had been requested by it to enquire upon what terms two or three hundred Palatines or Hollanders could be imported for that purpose; his opinion being asked, he answered that he should see Messrs. Valk, Beyer and Schouter in a few days, (for he was then on the eve of a journey to Boston) and would know from them, or advised me to apply to them (I do not now recollect which) to obtain knowledge of the practicability and convenience of this measure. All I aimed at was information myself; and if the above gentlemen can give it to me, it would oblige me. The Company would wish to know upon what terms they, or any others, in their opinion would engage to deliver 300 able labourers, Germans or Hollanders, not more than eight women, at Norfolk. Whether these would come under Indenture, and for what term, or upon wages, and what. In a word what they would stand the Company pr. poll, in either case, delivered at Norfolk, freight, procuring them, and every accidental expence included, to the moment of such delivery at the Ship's side. I am, etc.[88]

To ROBERT EDGE PINE

Mount Vernon, February 26, 1786.

Sir: Your favor of the 16th. of Decemr. (tho' some what delayed) came safely to hand.

[88] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The pictures arrived shortly after in good order, and meet the approbation of Mrs. Washington and myself, the first of whom thanks you for the portrait of Fanny Washington, with which you have been so polite as to present her: She with the Major are on a visit to her friends in the lower parts of this State, and have been so since the middle of December.

It is some time since I requested a Gentleman of Annapolis (who is owing me money and was to have sent it to me) to pay you Twenty guineas and sixteen Dollars; the first for balance due on the pictures, the latter for their frames; but having heard nothing from him respecting it, I begin to suspect it never has been done, and therefore send these sums by Mr. Hunter of Alexandria.

I have lately received a Letter from our old and worthy acquaintance Colo. Fairfax, who again mentions you in terms of great regard. Mrs. Washington unites her best wishes to me for you, on congratulations on the safe arrival of Mrs. Pine &ca. With great esteem I am, etc.[89]

To JOSEPH HAWKINS

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1786.

Sir: At the request of Mr. Booth[90] I give you the trouble of this Letter: this request, added to an inclination to do justice, must be my apology for it. I have no other motive than to rescue his character from the injurious aspersions, which he says have been cast at it.

My acquaintance with Mr. Booth is of more than thirty years standing. I have known him in the characters of Bachelor, Husband and widower, in all of which conduct has been unexceptionable. In that of husband and father it was ever esteemed

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[90] William Booth, of Westmoreland County, Va.

kind, affectionate and *remarkably* indulgent. In a word he has passed thro' life unimpeached by those who have had the best opportunities of forming a judgment of him, and to my best knowledge and belief has in every instance supported the character of a Gentleman.

I am, etc.[91]

To WILLIAM HUNTER

Mount Vernon, February 27, 1786.

Sir: Mr. Shaw informing me of your intended journey to Philadelphia, I take the freedom of asking you to carry Twenty guineas, and Sixteen Dollars for Mr. Pine the Portrait Painter; whom you will find at Baltimore or Philadelphia, at Col Rogers's if in the former, and at the Slade House, if at the latter.

Be so good as to take his rect. for the money; but previous to paying it, ask if this sum has not been offered by Mr. Jno. F. Mercer. This Gentleman is owing me money and out of it, was requested to pay the above sums whilst Mr. Pine was at Annapolis; but having no acct. of the compliance it is questionable, his having done it.

The bearer will deliver you the above sums, I wish you a pleasant journey and safe return and, with esteem and regard am etc.[92]

To GOVERNOR PATRICK HENRY

Mount Vernon, March 5, 1786.

Sir: Your Excellency's favor of the 6th. ulto. came duly to hand, but I had no opportunity before the 2d. inst: of laying it before the Directors of the Potomac Company.

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[91] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[92] From a copy of the original kindly furnished by W. L. R. Gifford, librarian of the St. Louis Mercantile Library Association, St. Louis, Mo.

By the Board, I am desired to inform your Excelly., that they decline taking the six felons in the public Goal; at the same time that they feel themselves obliged by the offer.[93] I have the honor, etc.[94]

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, March 6, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The Treasurer of the Potomack Company being desired by the Directors of it to send a careful hand to Annapolis for the advance due on the State subscription; I pray you to pay the Bearer (who will be that person) the £200, for which you requested me to draw on you at that place. I am, etc.

P. S. Since writing to you the 30th. of Jany. on this subject, I have myself sent the 20 guineas &c. to Mr. Pine.[94]

To JOHN MURRAY & CO.[95]

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1786.

Gentn: Your letter of the 6th. in answer to mine of the same date, is before me; but from the present view I have of the subject, I do not conceive that my entering into a Contract for Herrings on the terms offered by *you,* would be eligible; 1st. because in my judgment, you estimate them too low, lower than they usually sell for at the landings. 2dly. because your Salt is rated higher than, I believe it is to be bought for, more than I have lately given. 3dly. because Liverpool Salt is inadequate to the saving of Fish, and therefore useless in this business. 4thly. because I would not, on any terms, go to Dumfries for this Article; and fifthly, because it does not suit me to receive Salt *alone* in paymt.

[93] Governor Henry's letter is in the *Washington Papers.*
[94] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[95] Of Alexandria, Va.

Moreover, if your coarse salt is allum or lump Salt, I conceive it must be reduced by pounding, before it can be applied, which would add to the expence of curing. Lisbon is the proper kind of Salt for Fish.

From these considerations I must decline contracting to furnish Herring unless you are disposed to offer more favourable terms. I am, etc.[96]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, March 8, 1786.

Sir: I have just received your letter of the 20th. of last month, and request that you will proceed as you have begun, that is, to do equal and impartial justice to the Tenants and myself. I want no improper advantage of them on the one hand: on the other, where leases are clearly forfeited, by a manifest intention on the part of the Tenant to neglect all the Covenants in them, that were inserted for my benefit; and their sole aim has been to make traffic of the Land, I shall have no scruple in getting them aside, and beginning afresh upon the best rents I can get for ten years.

At any rate, it is my wish that you would be as attentive to the other Covenants of the Leases, as to that which exacts the rent: particularly to those which require a certain proportion of wood-Land to be left standing in one place, to orchards, to Meadows, and to buildings. These were as much objects with me, as the Rent, nay more, because to these I looked, to have the value of my land enhanced, whilst I was, in the first instance, contenting myself with low Rents. If therefore, these have passed off unnoticed by the Tenants, it should be punished equally with the non-payment of Rents. I mention these things because it is my wish they should be strictly complied with.

[96] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

There is another matter, or two which, in renting my Lands, I am desirous you should always keep in view, first, to lease to no person who has Lands of his own adjoining them; and 2dly. to no one who does not propose to live on the premises. My reasons are these, in the first case my Land will be cut down, worked and destroyed to save his own, whilst the latter will receive all the improvements. In the second case, if the Tenant does not live thereon it will not meet a much better fate, and negro Quarters and Tobacco pens will probably be the best edifices of the Tenement. One Grigg (I think his name is) an overseer to Colo. John Washington,[97] must be an exception, because, at the instance of my Brother, I consented to the purchase he has made.

Inclosed you have a Letter for Mr. Robt. Rutherford, of whom you will endeavor to receive the amount of the within. If you should succeed in this, you may carry it to my credit and draw a commission thereon as if collected for rent. I also send you an Account against a Captn. David Kennedy (I believe of Winchester) to receive if you can, on the same terms. I put this accot. about eighteen months ago into the hands of Genl. Morgan to whom Kennedy had, I believe, made sale of a Lott in Winchester, but know not to what effect. It may be well to enquire of Morgan concerning it, previous to an application to Kennedy. I am, etc.[98]

To HUGH HOLMES

Mount Vernon, March 10, 1786.

Sir: For the honor you have done me in calling your only child by my name, and that too, you add, when the issue of the

[97] John Augustine Washington.
[98] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

American struggle stood suspended. I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments.

My thanks are also due for your politeness in sending me a piece of Linen of your staple manufacture: and I am particularly indebted to you for the favourable wishes and flattering expressions of your letter to me of the 4th. of August last.

Your Country has my best wishes for the fullest of everything which is interesting to the rights of mankind, and you Sir, that you may be principal sharer of them, being, Your etc.[99]

To SAMUEL PURVIANCE

Mount Vernon, March 10, 1786.

Sir: Your Letter of the 6th. inst: is this moment put into my hands; was it in my power I would cheerfully answer your queries respecting the settlements on the Kanhawa; the nature of the water and quality of the soil.

But of the *first,* I only know from information that Colo. Lewis is settled there: from his own mouth I learnt that it was his intention to do so, and to establish a Town in the fork of the two rivers, where he proposed to fix families in the vicinity on his own Lands. Of the second, I never could obtain any distinct account of the navigation. It has been variously represented; favorably by some, extremely difficult by others, in its passage thro' the Gauley mountain, (which I presume is the Laurel hill): but the uncertainty of this matter will now soon be at an end, as there are commissioners appointed by this State to explore the navigation of that river and the communication between it and James river, with a view to a portage. This, equally with the extension of the Potomac navigation, was part of my original plan, and equally urged by me to our Assembly; for

[99] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

my object was to connect the Western and Eastern or Atlantic States together by strong commercial ties.

I am a friend, therefore on this principle to every channel that can be opened, and wish the people to have choice. The Kanhawa, and James river, if the obstacles in the former are not great, are certainly the shortest and best for the settlers thereon, for those on the Ohio below, above, perhaps as high as the little Kanhawa and for the Country immediately west of it.

The Monongahela and Yohoghaney with the Potomac are most convenient for all the settlers from the little Kanhawa, inclusively, to Fort Pitt and upwards, and west as far as the Lakes. Susquehanna and the Alleghany above Fort Pitt some distance, will accommodate a third District of Country; and may for ought I know, be equally convenient to the trade of the Lakes. All of them therefore have my best wishes; for as I have observed already, my object and my aim are political. If we cannot bind those people to us by interest, and it is no otherwise to be effected but by a commercial knot, we shall be no more to them after a while, than G. Britain or Spain, and they may be as closely linked with one or other of those powers, as we wish them to be with us, and in that event, they may be a severe thorn in our side.

With respect to the nature of the soil on the Kanhawa, the bottoms are fine, but the lands adjoining are broken. In some places the hills are very rich, in others piney and very poor: but the principal reason, as I conceive, why the settlement has not progressed more, is that the greater part if not all the good Lands, on the main river, are in the hands of persons who do not incline to reside thereon themselves, and possibly hold them too high for others, as there is a surrounding country open to them; this I take to be my own case, and might be an inducement to concur in any well concerted measures to further a

settlement, which might ultimately, not at too great a distance, subserve my interest in that quarter.

The Great Kanhawa is a long river with very little interruption for a considerable distance: No very large waters empty into it, I believe; Elk river, Coal river and a Creek called Pokitellico below the falls, and Green river above them, are the most considerable. I am glad to hear that the Susquehanna canal is so well advanced. I thank you for the offer of Mr. Nielson's services in the western country, and am, with very great, &c.

To WILLIAM DRAYTON

Mount Vernon, March 25, 1786.

Sir: The Letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 23d. of November last, came safely; tho' not at so early a period as might have been expected from the date of it. I remark this by way of apology for my silence 'till now.

I feel very sensibly, the honor conferred on me by the South Carolina Society for promoting and improving agriculture and other rural concerns, by unanimously electing me the first honorary member of that Body; and I pray you Sir, as Chairman, to offer my best acknowledgements and thanks for this mark of its attention. To you, for the flattering terms in which the desires of the Society have been communicated, my thanks are particularly due.

It is much to be wished that every State in the Union would establish a Society similar to this; and that these Societies would correspond with, and fully and regularly impart to each other, the result of the experiments actually made in husbandry together with such other useful discoveries as have stood, or are likely to stand the test of investigation. Nothing in my opinion would contribute more to the welfare of these States, than the

proper management of our Lands; and nothing, in this State particularly, seems to be less understood. The present mode of cropping practised among us, is destructive to landed property; and must, if persisted in much longer, ultimately ruin the holders of it. I have the honor, etc.[1]

To JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, March 27, 1786.

Dear Brother: Your letter of the 17th did not reach me till yesterday afternoon. Whence your overseers apprehensions proceed, I know not; for if I recollect right, I gave him, myself, assurances of the plan when I was in Berkeley in the fall of 1784; and since, have informed Mr. Muse that he was to receive a confirmation of the lease. It is true that, being a nonresident on the Lott he would have been excluded, had it not been for the communication of your wishes, that he might have it, antecedant to the above period; because, for reasons which will readily occur to you, I had established it as a maxim to accept no Tenants that did not mean to reside on the Land; or who had land of their own adjoining to it, not expecting, in either case, much improvement on, or much justice to mine under these circumstances.

At the time I sent you the flour that was manufactured at my Mill, I requested to be informed if you could tell me where corn was to be had in your parts, or within your knowledge; but having received no answer to that letter, nor any one from you since, till the one above acknowledged; I sent to York River for 200 Barr., which I have just landed. I do not therefore stand in need of that at the little Falls Quarter.

[1]From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Herewith you will receive an Alexandria Gazette containing a demd. upon the subscribers to the Potomack Navigation for two other dividends for carrying on the work, which the directors mean to do with spirit; and they hope to good effect this summer. It also contains an address from Mr. Stoddart to Messrs. Washington & Co. the first of whom I hope has, 'ere this, seen the impropriety of hazarding a valuable estate upon so precarious a tenure as trade and either has, already, or soon will withdraw himself from it. I beg when you see him, that you will give my love and thanks to him, for the fruit trees he sent me, which came safe, and were a very valuable present.

All here join most cordially, in every good wish for you, my sister and family, and with every sentiment of regard and affection I am ever yrs.[2]

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, March 30, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Having cause lately, to apprehend a miscarriage of the letter, of which the enclosed is a duplicate, I do myself the honor of forwarding this copy as the best apology as I can make for a silence that might otherwise be ascribed to inattention, which would give me pain, as I have pleasure in your correspondences, and would wish to keep up a friendly intercourse with you by letter.

As your last letters gave me hopes of seeing you in Virginia this Spring, and nothing since has contradicted it, I think I may shortly look for that pleasure, and therefore shall add nothing more in this letter than my best wishes for the pleas-

[2] The text is from a typed copy of the original, in the possession of Mrs. John A. Thomson, of Winchester, Va., furnished through the kindness of C. Vernon Eddy, librarian of the Hendley Library, Winchester, Va.

antness of your voyage, and assurances of the happiness I shall derive from saluting you under my own roof; being, with every sentiment of esteem and regard Dr. Sir Yr., etc.[3]

To JOHN FITZGERALD AND GEORGE GILPIN

Mount Vernon, March 31, 1786.

Gentn.: Yesterday Mr. Brindley, in company with a Mr. Harris, Manager for the James river Company (the latter having been sent for the former, by the Directors thereof) left this on their way to Richmond, from whence Mr. Brindley expects to be returned, as far as Alexandria, in seven days from the date hereof. I have engaged him to call upon Colo. Gilpin on his rout back.

Mr. Brindley and Mr. Harris took the great Falls in their way down and both approve of the present line for our Canal: the first very much; he conceives that 9/10ths of the expence of the one fifth proposed, will be saved by this cut; the work altogether as secure, and the entrance into the river by no means unfavorable. He thinks however that a good deal of attention and judgment is required in fixing Locks there; the height of which he observes is always governed by the ground; they frequently run from four to eighteen feet, and some times are as high as twenty four.

The nature and declination of the ground, according to him, is alone to direct, and where this will admit he thinks the larger the Locks are made the better, because more convenient.

With respect to this part of the business I feel, and always have confessed an entire incompetency: nor do I conceive that theoretical knowledge alone is adequate to the undertaking. Locks, upon the most judicious plan, will certainly be expensive; and if not properly constructed and judiciously placed,

[3] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

may be altogether useless. It is for these reasons therefore that I have frequently suggested (though no decision has been had) the propriety of employing a professional man.

Whether the expense of obtaining one in, and bringing him from Europe has been thought unnecessary, or too burthensome for the advantages, which are to be expected, I know not: but as it is said no person in this country has *more* practical knowledge than Mr. Brindley, I submit to your consideration the propriety of engaging him to take the Falls in his way back; to examine, level and digest a plan for Locks at that place; if it shall appear good, and his reasons in support of the spots and sizes conclusive it will justify the adoption; if palpably erroneous, there is no obligation upon us to follow him; and the expence in that case [is the only evil which can result from it. this for the chance of a probable benefit, I am not only willing, but desirous of encountering; and if Colo. Gilpin has not already made the trip to that place which he proposed at our last visit, and disappointment there, it would give me great pleasure if it could be so timed as for him to accompany Mr. Brindley. This would not only give countenance to the latter, but afford him aid also; and might be a mean of preventing the little jealousies which otherwise might arise in the minds of our own managers. Taking Mr. Brindley to the works *now,* may, ultimately, save expence; at the same time, having a plan before us, would enable us at all convenient times, to be providing materials for its execution. I am, &c.

P. S. If my proposition is acceded to, it might be well to fix, at once what shall be given to Mr. Brindley. I will readily subscribe to what you two Gentlemen may agree to give him on this occasion][4]

[4]From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.* The part in brackets is from a facsimile, in Washington's writing, in the *University of California Chronicle,* October, 1925, where a note is added by Washington, April 2, explaining the delay in sending the letter.

To REVEREND TIMOTHY DWIGHT

Mount Vernon, April 1, 1786.

Sir: I have been favored with a letter from you (without place or date) accompanying the Conquest of Canaan;[5] for both I pray you to accept my grateful thanks, and the acknowledgment of the honor you have done me by the dedication.

Your fears with respect to the merits of the Poem, I hope are removed, for it is a pleasing performance, and meets the approbation of all who have read it. I have never had an opportunity of subscribing to the work, or I should have done it with pleasure.

With very great esteem and respect I am, etc.[6]

To LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR THOMAS CUSHING

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1786.

Dr. Sir: I have now the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your several favors of the 6th. 9th. and 16th. of Novr. and 22d. of Feby. I purposely delayed my acknowledgements of the first three, 'till I should receive the one promised therein, that I might give you no more trouble with my concerns than was unavoidable.

I feel myself under great obligation to you for your obliging and disinterested attention to my Jack; and for your kindness to the person who was sent to conduct him home: he, the Spaniard, and the Jack Ass all arrived safely, and in as short a time as could well have been expected from the great distance, and manner of their traveling.

Your Draft on me in favor of Messrs. Isaac and William Smith, was paid the moment it was presented; and I have since

[5] An epic poem in 11 books, published in 1785.
[6] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

paid Captn. Pearce's Accot., but not to the amount of his order in favor of a Mr. Hartshorne Mercht. in Alexandria: for I believe Captn. Pearce was ashamed himself of his charges after they were made, as he requested the above Gentleman, in a second letter, to receive whatever should be thought right. Mr. Hartshorne therefore, adding for the full passage of the Jack, made the A/c. of Mr. Ashton, in other respects, his government for the residue and instead of demanding £63.5.6. was content to receive £33.3.6. and thought it enough. You have, I am persuaded, hit upon the true and only reason why Captn. Pearce withheld his Accot. from your examination; preferring to send it hither, exorbitant as it appeared from the face of it, rather than have entered into any dispute concerning it, I should have paid it had I not waited a while to learn the result of your application.

Mrs. Washington joins me in respectful compliments to yourself and Lady. and with sentiments of great esteem and regard, I am,[7]

To CHARLES CARROLL, ROBERT MORRIS, AND SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1786.

Sir: The Revd. Mr. Griffith[8] who will present this letter to you is possessed of much property in the town of Alexandria, the value of which he is desireous of encreasing by buildings. To enable him to do this he wishes to borrow on interest, about £2500. As security for such a loan, he is willing to mortgage his interest in the above place, and proposes as a further security to offer other means; the nature of all he will explain to you. They are in my opinion amply sufficient, such as I should

[7] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[8] Rev. David Griffith.

not hesitate to take if I had the money to lend; but you will be able to judge more fully of the matter, when they are laid before you.

From a long and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Griffith, I have a high opinion of his worth and entire dependance on his representations, which (as he may in some degree be a stranger to you) I have thought an act of justice to mention.[9] I am, etc.[10]

To HENRY LEE

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Ascribe my silence to any cause rather than a want of friendship, or to a disclination to keep up a friendly intercourse with you, by letter. Absences from home, hurry of business, Company &c., however justly they might be offered, are too stale and common place to be admitted. I therefore discard them; throwing myself upon your lenity, and depending more upon your goodness, than on any apology I can make as an excuse for not having acknowledged the receipt of your favours of the 16th. of Feby. and 2d. of March, before this time.

The first came to hand just after I had made one trip to our works at the great Falls of this River; and when I was upon the eve of another to the same place, where the Board of Directors by appointment met the first of last month. I can therefore inform you from my own observation, that this business is progressing in a manner that exceeds our most sanguine expectation, difficulties vanish as we proceed, the time and expence which it was supposed we should have to encounter

[9] As printed from the letter sent, in the Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4), the text varies in minor verbal details from this letter.

[10] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

at this place, will both be considerably reduced. After a thorough investigation of the ground there *we* have departed from Ballandine's rout for the Canal, and marked a fresh cut, which in our judgments will save 4/5th. of the labour, consequently proportionate time and expence, and in the opinion of Mr. Brindley who has just been to see it, 9/10ths., and be equally good when effected. Upon the whole, to be laconic, if there are any doubts remaining of the success of this work, they must be confined to three classes of men, viz: those who have not opportunities of investigations, who will not be at the trouble of doing it when it is in their power, and those whose interests being opposed, do not *wish* to be convinced. The great Fall is the only place where, under our present view of the River, we conceive it necessary to establish Locks; the ground favors them, and there can be no doubt (this being the case) of Locks succeeding as well in this as in other Countries, as the materials for erecting them are abundant. What difficulties may be found where no difficulty was apprehended, I will not take upon me to declare: where they were thought wholly to lie, we are free from apprehension.

My sentiments with respect to the fœderal Government, are well known, publicly and privately have they been communicated without reserve; but my *opinion* is, that there is more wickedness than ignorance in the conduct of the States, or in other words, in the conduct of those who have too much influence in the government of them; and until the curtain is withdrawn, and the private views and selfish principles upon which these men act, are exposed to public notice, I have little hope of amendment without another convulsion. The picture of our Affairs as drawn by the Committee, approved by Congress and handed to the public,[11] did not at all surprize me:

[11] See *Journals of the Continental Congress*, Mar. 28, 1785.

before that report, tho' I could not go into the minutiæ of matters, I was more certain of the agregate of our [12] than I am now of the remedy which will be applied; without the latter I do not see upon what ground your Agent at the Court of Morocco, and the other at Algiers, are to treat, unless, having to do with new hands, they mean to touch the old string, and make them dance awhile to the tune of promises.

I thank you for the pamphlet which contains the correspondence between Mr. Jay and Mr. Littlepage;[13] and shall be obliged to you for a Gazette containing the publication of the latter, which appears to have given rise to them. I am, etc.[14]

To DAVID RAMSAY

Mount Vernon, April 5, 1786.

Sir: I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments of your letter of the 22d. of Feby., and thanks for the history of the Revolution of South Carolina,[15] with which you have been so good as to present me. From what I have heard of its merits, I anticipate much pleasure in the perusal of the work.

It is to be regretted that your local situation did not allow you, with convenience, to take a more comprehensive view of the war. My gratitude for the favourable sentiments you have been pleased to express for me is due, and with esteem, etc.[14]

To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, April 9, 1786.

Sir: I have been favored with your letters of the 20th. of Jany., 24th. of Feby. and 13th. of March, the last of which

[12] Left blank in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.
[13] Lewis Littlepage.
[14] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[15] Published in 1785 in two volumes.

speaks of a letter written by you to me of the same date, this letter has never got to hand: but I have received in Alexandria the £60, which Messrs. Pennock & Skipwith promised to remit me on your accot., as also the Wine from Captn. Earle, in very good order.

My situation, since my retreat from public life, has been such as to put it out of my power to go into an examination and settlement of Accots. with that precision which is requisite; and among others, the transactions between the deceased Colo. Lewis and myself stand open. I do not know (from any thing my memory affords) on what account he could draw an order in favor of Henry Mitchell, as I recollect no dealings with that Gentn., but presume it must be right. Nevertheless, if there is an Accot. annexed to the order, or if the order is expressive of the purpose for which it was drawn, you would do me a favor in transmitting a copy of it.

I have made several ineffectual applications for my accot. with Mr. Hill; but as Dr. Stuart is again going into that part of the Country in which he lives, I will make one effort more to obtain it, 'till this happens I can say nothing with respect to his credits, but will advise you as soon as it is in my power.

In one of your former letters you intimated that my superfine Flour would sell well in Norfolk, and it was my intention to have consigned you some 'ere this; but as the quantity I make is small, the demand for it in Alexandria has generally kept pace with my manufactory. However I believe it would now be in my power to send you from 50 to 100 barrels, if you thought the present prices in your Town would answer; and that you may be enabled to judge, I shall inform you that I have not sold one barrel this year which has not netted at my Mill 38/, cash paid on delivery; and some at 40/. Would it nett the former at Norfolk, free of freight commission and

storage? Your answer would determine my conduct, and I shall be glad to receive it by the return of the Post. I am, etc.[16]

To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: The violent rains and consequent freshes, have given such interruption to the Stages in this part of the world, that your favor of the 15th. ulto. did not reach my hands 'till saturday last. I accede to the pecuniary allowance of two hundred Dollars pr. Am: required by Mr. Lear, in addition to the stipulations mentioned in my last, as a compensation for his services, and shall be glad to receive him into my family as soon as he can make it convenient to repair to it. At any rate I shall be glad to know, as nearly as may be, when to expect him, that I may arrange matters accordingly. There can be little doubt of Mr. Lear's finding, by method and arrangement, more than the time he speaks of for Study, to facilitate, rather than impede which would give me pleasure, as far as it can be made to comport with the purposes for which he is employed. With the greatest esteem, etc.[16]

To WILLIAM WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Three days ago *only*, I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 18th. of December, under cover of one from Mr. Hammond of Baltimore. This gentleman writes me that the boxes which you had the goodness to send me, were then shipped on board the Baltimore packet for Alexandria. I every moment look for them, and feel myself much indebted

[16] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

for your kind attention to my request in this instance. I shall plant the acorns, and nurture the young trees, when they arrive, with great care; those brought last year by my Nephew (chiefly of the Laurel) stood the passage, the summer and the Winter, with very little covering, very well. I am now transplanting them from the box in which they were brought.

At the proper season if you could make it convenient, I should be obliged to you for saving for me some seed of the Palmetto, and of any other trees or shrubs that are curious, in Carolina, and not natives of this Country.

Mrs. Washington, and my Nephew Geo. A. Washington who has taken unto himself a wife, join me in every good wish for your Lady and Self, and with sincere esteem and regard, I am, etc.[17]

*To JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1786.

My dear Sir: Your favor of the 20th. of Feby. came safely, tho' tedeously; as it is not more than a few days since I received it, and the inclosure, for which I thank you. The author, at the sametime that he pays a just tribute to the deceased does no discredit to his own talents.

I hope nothing will intervene to prevent the tour you have in contemplation to the Southward; and I persuade myself you will believe me very sincere, when I assure you of the pleasure I shall feel at seeing you under my roof; in wch. every inhabitant of the mansion (acquainted with you) will participate. Your acquaintance G. A Washington, has taken unto himself a wife (Fanny Bassett the Neice of Mrs. Washington) both of whom live with us.

[17] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The inclosed for Mr. Dwight, I take the liberty of committing to your care, because the letter which I received from him (and of which this is an acknowledgment) having neither date nor place to it, I am at a loss where to direct it. If my address is wrong (for your Parsons sometimes turn Lawyers) I pray you to correct it.

Mrs. Washington and George, join me in every good wish for yourself, Mrs. Trumbull and family, and with sentiments of sincere esteem and perfect friendship I am etc.[18]

To ROBERT MORRIS

Mount Vernon, April 12, 1786.

Dear Sir: I give you the trouble of this letter at the instance of Mr. Dalby of Alexandria; who is called to Philadelphia to attend what he conceives to be a vexatious lawsuit respecting a slave of his, which a Society of Quakers in the city (formed for such purposes) have attempted to liberate; The merits of this case will no doubt appear upon trial. but from Mr. Dalby's state of the matter, it should seem that this Society is not only acting repugnant to justice so far as its conduct concerns strangers, but, in my opinion extremely impolitickly with respect to the State, the City in particular; and without being able, (but by acts of tyranny and oppression) to accomplish their own ends. He says the conduct of this society is not sanctioned by Law: had the case been otherwise, whatever my opinion of the Law might have been, my respect for the policy of the State would on this occasion have appeared in my silence; because against the penalties of promulgated Laws one may guard; but there is no avoiding the snares of

[18] From a photostat in the *Washington Papers*.

individuals, or of private societies. And if the practice of this Society of which Mr. Dalby speaks, is not discountenanced, none of those whose *misfortune* it is to have slaves as attendants, will visit the City if they can possibly avoid it; because by so doing they hazard their property; or they must be at the expence (and this will not always succeed) of providing servants of another description for the trip.

I hope it will not be conceived from these observations, that it is my wish to hold the unhappy people, who are the subject of this letter, in slavery. I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is by Legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting. But when slaves who are happy and contented with their present masters, are tampered with and seduced to leave them; when masters are taken unawares by these practices; when a conduct of this sort begets discontent on one side and resentment on the other, and when it happens to fall on a man, whose purse will not measure with that of the Society, and he looses his property for want of means to defend it; it is oppression in the latter case, and not humanity in any; because it introduces more evils than it can cure.

I will make no apology for writing to you on this subject; for if Mr. Dalby has not misconceived the matter, an evil exists which requires a remedy; if he has, my intentions have been good, though I may have been too precipitate in this address. Mrs. Washington joins me in every good and kind wish for Mrs. Morris and your family, and I am, &c.[19]

[19] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To BUSHROD WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, April 13, 1786.

Dear Bushrod: If Royal gift[20] will administer, he shall be at the Service of your Mares, but at present he seems too full of Royalty, to have any thing to do with a plebean race; perhaps his Stomach may come to him, if not, I shall wish he had never come from his Most Catholic Majesty's Stables.

Your Papa has not been here yet. I am just come in from a Ride, the Dinner bell rings, and your Man says he must go off after it. So offer me affectionately to all, and believe me to be sincerely[21]

*To NOAH WEBSTER

Mount Vernon, April 17, 1786.

Sir: Mr. Lee,[22] yesterday evening, gave me the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 31st. ulto, and the book with which you were so obliging as to accompany it, for both I pray you to accept my thanks. The author some time ago had the goodness to send me two copies of the poem.[23]

I am equally obliged to you, Sir, for your kind assurance of looking out for an Instructor for the little folks of this family; but believe I have no occasion to trouble you in this business now. Sometime in the course of last summer, when Genl. Lincoln was here, I made particular enquiry of him on this head; and though he could not at that time, point out a character which he thought would answer my purposes in all respects, yet he has lately named a Gentleman of whom

[20] Washington had named the jack from the King of Spain "Royal Gift."

[21] From the original in the John Davis Batchelder Collection in the Library of Congress.

[22] Arthur(?) Lee.

[23] Rev. Timothy Dwight's "Conquest of Canaan."

he speaks in high terms; and has given the conditions on which he wd come; which being acceded to on my part and a letter written to that effect, I conceive the matter is closed. If it should be otherwise, I will again give you the trouble of hearing from me on this subject.

My best wishes will attend you in your lectures, and in the prosecution of your design of refining the language, and improving the system of education, so as to reduce it to perfect regularity. I am, etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

To JOHN ARMISTEAD

Mount Vernon, April 17, 1786.

Sir: It has been my hope since my return, that it would be unnecessary for me to remind you of the debt due to me from the Estate of your deceased Father; the speedy payment of which, at different times I have received assurances of from yourself. Besides standing much in need of the money (which alone will, I persuade myself, be a stimulus to the discharge of my claim) it may be well for you to consider the nature of it, and with what rapidity a protested Bill encreases the original sum. This is no inducement however for me to let it lie; for, as I have just hinted, I can with truth declare to you that my want of the money is more essential to me, than the interest arising therefrom. I am, etc.[24]

To WILLIAM HARTSHORNE

Mount Vernon, April 19, 1786.

Sir: I am sorry that I have been so troublesome and teasing to you on accot. of the seeds you were so obliging as to

[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

endeavour to procure for me; but as my Boat is sent to Town, I am induced to ask if they are arrived, that they may in that case embrace the present conveyance. If they are not already at hand, I shall be obliged to you for countermanding the order for the Buck wheat, as it is now totally useless for the experimental purposes for which I wanted it. This is nearly the case with respect to the Flax seed; but I will try late sowing, rather than let the season pass over altogether, consequently will wait a few days longer for this, in which time if it does not arrive, I pray it may be countermanded also. I am, etc.[25]

To REVEREND WILLIAM GORDON

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Mr. Lund Washington having expressed a wish to quit business and live in retirement and ease, I could not oppose his inclination; and his having carried these desires into effect, that kind of business which he usually transacted for me, is now thrown on my shoulders in addition to what they bore before, and has left me less time than ever for my numerous correspondences and other avocations. I mention this by way of apology for not having acknowledged the receipt of your several late favors, at an earlier date.

As soon as your subscription papers came to my hands, I offered one in Alexandria and sent another to Fredericksburgh: from the first, a specific return has been made of the subscribers and is now enclosed; from the other, eleven pounds have been sent me with out the paper; the Gentleman (the Honl. James Mercer Esqr. one of the Judges of our General Court) having informed me that he would take it with him

[25] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

to Richmond, and endeavor to encrease the number of subscribers there. This sum of eleven pounds added to the amount of the paper inclosed, makes £42 with which I have bought a Bill on Rhode Island.[26] I endeavoured to get one on Boston, but could not without waiting; which I thought might be more inconvenient, than the negotiation at the former place.

Your Cypher came safely to hand. I have not had leisure to examine it, but presuming no difficulty will arise in the use, I have laid it by 'till occasion may call it forth. From the purport of your letters, you must be on the eve of your departure for Europe. My best wishes, in wch. Mrs. Washington and the family join me, are offered for a prosperous voyage, and the accomplishment of your plans. I am, etc.[27]

To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1786.

Dear Sir: As Doctr. Gordons departure for England is an event that was to have taken place about this time and may have happened I take the liberty, in that case, of requesting the favor of you to do what shall appear right with the inclosed Subscription Paper and Bill.

I will make no apology for the trouble this request may give you as I persuade myself your inclination to serve the Doctr. will keep pace with mine, and neither can have any other motive in the business than to serve and oblige him.

With every sentiment of esteem, etc. [HV.L.]

[26] The "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers* has the following note: "The Bill referred to in the above is drawn by Josiah Watson & Co., on Messrs. Cromel & Caleb Child, Merchants, Warren, Rhode Island, for £42. at three days sight with or without advice; and is dated the 19th. April 1786."

[27] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS BRERETON[28]

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1786.

Sir: Within these few days I have received your letter of the 12th., and some time ago, I recollect to have been favored with another letter from you, which in the hurry of business got overlooked.

It is now more than two years since indirectly I obtained a sight of the deceas'd Mrs. Savage's Will. I then thought, and still do think it strange that the Executors of this Will, should never have made any official communication thereof to the Trustees of that Lady in this Country; nor have made any direct enquiry concerning the situation of her affairs here. These may be summed up in a few words; and shall be found to be as follows. When matters came to extremity between Doctr. Savage and his wife, and Mr. Fairfax and myself were obliged to put the trust Bond in suit to recover her annuity; the Doctor made use of all the chicanery of Law and Lawyers, to procrastinate the Suit; which the tardiness of our Courts (and during one period of the Revolution the suspension of justice) but too well enabled him to effect. It was therefore long before a judgment at common Law could be obtained; and this was no sooner done, than he threw the matter into Chancery, where I am told, for I have had no share in the management of this business for the last ten years, (that is since I took the command of the American forces) it has lain ever since. I believe Mr. Fairfax has done every thing in his power to bring the matter to issue; and I have heard, I think from himself, that there is now a probability of its happening soon. With great truth I can assure you that not one farthing of

[28] Of Baltimore, Md.

Mrs. Savage's annuity was ever paid to the Trustees; whilst we have been obliged to advance money out of our own pockets to carry on the prosecution, and whilst, moreover, from a representation of the distress that Lady was involved in, I gave her a Bill to the amot. of £53., on Jas. Gildart Esqr. of Liverpool, which is still due to me.

This is the best Accot. I am able to give you of the Trust, and you are at liberty to communicate the purport of it to Mrs. Innis.[29] I am, etc.[30]

*To MARTIN COCKBURN

Mount Vernon, May 3, 1786.

Sir: Being informed that you receive the lists of Taxable property in Truro Parish, I do, tho' late send you that of mine.

Do you hire your Negro Tailor by the year? If so, on what terms? and is he now, or will he soon be, disengaged? My Compliments, in which Mrs. Washington joins, are offered to Mrs. Cockburn.

With esteem, I am etc.[31]

To THOMAS SMITH

May 8, 1786.

Sir: Vale. Crawford died indebted to me, say £100 Virga. Curry., more or less, previously thereto he wrote me the letter dated Jacobs Creek May the 6th. 1774, and accompanied it with the Bill of sale herewith enclosed, dated May 8th. 1774. Query. Is this Bill now valid? Will it secure my Debt?

[29] Ann (Mrs. Richard) Ennis (Innis), of Dublin, Ireland.

[30] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[31] From a photostat of the original in the "Washington Photostats" in the Library of Congress.

this is all I want. And can it be recovered without my hazarding a defeat; which may add cost without benefit.

If these points are determined in the affirmative, I would endeavour to secure my Debt under the cover of the bill, and desire that you would prosecute my claim accordingly, but not otherwise. With great esteem, I am, etc.[32]

To THOMAS CRESAP

Mount Vernon, May 8, 1786.

Sir: Your letter of the 8th. of last month came to my hands just as I was leaving home for Richmond, which is the reason you have not received an earlier acknowledgment of it.

I am not a member of, nor am I in any manner, interested in the affairs of the Ohio Company, nor indeed do I know at this time, of whom it consists, further than of those claiming under, and mentioned by you, of Colo. Mason and of the heir of my brother Augustine, who lives at the distance of an hundred miles from me; and is one whom I scarcely ever saw.

I feel myself much obliged by your polite attention in offering me a Lott at the mouth of the South branch; it will, I dare say, be a convenient spot, where on to establish a Town. I am, etc.[32]

To THOMAS FREEMAN

Mount Vernon, May 8, 1786.

Sir: Being informed that Mrs. Crawford is on the point of having her negroes sold to discharge a Debt due from her late husband, Colo. Crawford, to Mr. James Cleveland, for whom you are Agent; I will, rather than such an event shall

[32] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

take place, agree to apply any money of mine, which may be in your hands, towards the discharge of the execution; and desire, in that case, you will receive such security as Mrs. Crawford can give for reimbursing me. I am, etc.[33]

To MARQUIS DE ST. SIMON

Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786.

Sir: I received with great pleasure (a few days ago in a letter from the Marquis de la Fayette) the news of your being in good health. The recollection of your gallant services, and the happy moments I have had the honor to spend with you in this country, will always be dear to me.

It appears by the Marquis's letter that the answer to a letter which you did me the honor to write to me (now more than two years) respecting the order of the Cincinnati, had never come to your hands. I cannot tell how to accot. for it, as all the papers are in the hands of the Secretary General. I well remember however, that at the general meeting which was held at Philadelphia in May 1784, that I laid all the letters with which I had been favored on that subject, before the members which constituted it; and that the Secretary was ordered to communicate the determinations which that meeting had come to, to the gentlemen who had written to the President, one of which was, that the members of the Society in France were to constitute a meeting of themselves in order, among other things, to investigate the claims of those who conceived they were entitled to the order, and to decide on them accordingly; in as much as the Meeting in this Country was not intended to be held oftener than triennially; and could not well at those times enter into the detail of a business

[33] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

which with more propriety would be taken up by the several State Meetings, and the one it had just authorized to be held in France.

If Mr. de Menonville should happen to be with you, I pray you to offer him my Compliments, and to be assured yourself of the sentiments of esteem and respect with which, I have the honor, etc.[34]

To THOMAS RINGGOLD TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786.

Sir: Being at Richmond when your favor of the 22d. ulto. came to this place, is the reason of its having lain so long unacknowledged. I delayed not a moment after my return, to discharge the balance of your decead. Brother's Accot. against me, to Mr. Watson; probably he has informed you of it.

As there were few men for whom I had a warmer friendship, or greater regard, than for your brother,[35] while living; so with much truth I can assure you that there are none whose death I more sincerely regret; and I pray you and his numerous friends to permit me to mingle my sorrows with theirs on this unexpected and melancholy occasion, and that they would accept my compliments of condolance. I am, etc.[34]

To MARCHIONESSE DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786.

Madam: Of all the correspondencies with which I am honored, none has given me more pleasure than yours, none which I am more desireous of continuing, or more ambitious to deserve. What then My Dr. Madam, must have been my

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[35] Tench Tilghman.

mortification when, instead of receiving the letter you did me the honor to write to me on the 15th. of April last year, in due time, it was not 'till sometime in the course of last month, that I received it at all, and the parcels with which you were pleased to accompany it. By mistake these parcels lay at Bordeaux a considerable time after they had arrived there, before it was discovered for whom they were intended, and then were sent by a Vessel which took a very circuitous voyage to this Country. I trouble you with this detail of matters by way of apology for what otherwise might appear a want of sensibility in me for your distinguished and valuable favors, than which nothing is, or can be more flattering and pleasing to my vanity.

The tokens of regard with which Miss de la Fayette and my name-sake have honored the young folks of this family, will cement the friendship which seems to be rising in their tender breasts; and will encrease those flames of it which they have imbibed from their parents, to which nothing can add strength, but the endearments which flow from personal interviews, and the unreserved exchange of liberal sentiments. Will you not then Madam, afford them this opportunity? May we hope for it soon? If the assurances of the sincerest esteem and affection: if the varieties of uncultivated nature; the novelty of exchanging the gay and delightful scenes of Paris with which you are surrounded, for the rural amusements of a country in its infancy; if the warbling notes of the feathered songsters on our Lawns and Meads, can for a moment make you forget the melody of the Opera, and the pleasure of the Court, these, all invite you to give us this honour, and the opportunity of expressing to you personally, those sentiments of attachment and love with which you have inspired us.

The noon-tide of life is now passed with Mrs. Washington and myself, and all we have to do is to spend the evening of our days in tranquillity, and glide gently down a stream which no human effort can ascend. We must therefore, however reluctantly it is done, forego the pleasures of such a visit as you kindly invite us to make. But the case with you, is far otherwise, your days are in their meidian brightness. In the natural order of things you have many years to come, in which you may endulge yourself in all the amusements which variety can afford, and different countries produce; and in receiving those testimonies of respect, which every one in the United States would wish to render you.

My Mother will receive the compliments you honor her with, as a flattering mark of your attention; and I shall have great pleasure in delivering them myself. My best wishes and vows are offered for you, and for the fruits of your love, and with every sentiment of respect and attachment. I have the honor, etc.[36]

To REVEREND JOSEPH ECKLEY[37]

Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th. ulto. and its enclosure. I was indebted to Doctr. Gordon before he left the Country, for the Boston Independent Chronicle; and am so since to your goodness for offering to continue them. The Doctr. sent these papers unasked, after having read them himself (being a subscriber), but as their continuation must be attended with expence and trouble, you would oblige me by withholding them. To be candid, my avocations are so numerous that I very rarely find time to look into Gazettes

[36] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[37] Of Boston, Mass.

after they come to me. I feel myself, however, not less indebted to your politeness, and obliging offer, by the non-acceptance of it. With respect, I am, etc.[38]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786.

My dear Marquis: The Letter which you did me the favor to write to me by Mr. Barrett dated the 6th. of Feby., together with the parcel and packages which accompanied it, came safely to hand; and for which I pray you to accept my grateful acknowledgments.

The account given of your tour thro' Prussia and other States of Germany, to Vienna and back; and of the Troops which you saw reviewed in the pay of those Monarchs, at different places, is not less pleasing than it is interesting; and must have been as instructive as entertaining to yourself. Your reception at the Courts of Berlin, Vienna, and elsewhere must have been pleasing to you: to have been received by the King of Prussia, and Prince Henry his brother, (who as soldiers and politicians can yield the palm to none) with such marks of attention and distinction, was as indicative of their discernment, as it is of your merit, and will encrease my opinion of them. It is to be lamented however that great characters are seldom without a blot. That one man should tyranise over millions, will always be a shade in that of the former; whilst it is pleasing to hear that a due regard to the rights of mankind, is characteristic of the latter: I shall revere and love him for this trait of his character. To have viewed the several fields of Battle over which you passed, could not, among other sensations, have failed to excite this thought, here have fallen

[38] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

thousands of gallant spirits to satisfy the ambition of, or to support their sovereigns perhaps in acts of oppression or injustice! melancholy reflection! For what wise purposes does Providence permit this? Is it as a scourge for mankind, or is it to prevent them from becoming too populous? If the latter, would not the fertile plains of the Western world receive the redundancy of the old.

For the several articles of intelligence with which you have been so good as to furnish me, and for your sentimts. on European politics, I feel myself very much obliged; on these I can depend. Newspaper accounts are too sterile, vague and contradictory, on which to form any opinion, or to claim even the smallest attention.

The account of and observations which you have made on the policy and practice of Great Britain at the other Courts of Europe, respecting these States, I was but too well informed and convinced of before. Unhappily for us, though their accounts are greatly exaggerated, yet our conduct has laid the foundation for them. It is one of the evils of democratical governments, that the people, not always seeing and frequently misled, must often feel before they can act right; but then evils of this nature seldom fail to work their own cure. It is to be lamented, nevertheless, that the remedies are so slow, and that those, who may wish to apply them seasonably are not attended to before they suffer in person, in interest and in reputation. I am not without hopes, that matters will take a more favorable turn in the fœderal Constitution. The discerning part of the community have long since seen the necessity of giving adequate powers to Congress for national purposes; and the ignorant and designing must yield to it ere long. Several late Acts of the different Legislatures have a tendency thereto; among these, the Impost which is now acceded to by every

State in the Union, (tho' clogged a little by that of New York) will enable Congress to support the national credit in pecuniary matters better than it has been; whilst a measure in which this state has taken the lead at its last session, will it is to be hoped give efficient powers to that Body for all commercial purposes. This is a nomination of some of its first characters to meet other Commissioners from the several States in order to consider of and decide upon such powers as shall be necessary for the sovereign power of them to act under;[39] which are to be reported to the respective Legislatures at their autumnal sessions for, it is to be hoped, final adoption; thereby avoiding those tedious and futile deliberations, which result from recommendations and partial concurrences; at the same time that it places it at once in the power of Congress to meet European Nations upon decisive and equal ground. All the Legislatures, which I have heard from, have come into the proposition, and have made very judicious appointments: much good is expected from this measure, and it is regretted by many, that more objects were not embraced by the meeting. A General Convention is talked of by many for the purpose of revising and correcting the defects of the fœderal government; but whilst this is the wish of some, it is the dread of others from an opinion that matters are not yet sufficiently ripe for such an event.

The British still occupy our Posts to the Westward, and will, I am persuaded, continue to do so under one pretence or another, no matter how shallow, as long as they can: of this, from

[39] "The General Assembly have appointed Edmund Randolph, James Madison, junr., Walter Jones, St. George Tucker, Meriwether Smith, David Ross, William Ronald and George Mason Commissioners to meet others from the different States . . . for the purpose of framing, such regulations of Trade as may be judged necessary to promote the general interests. I have to request your Excellency's attention to this subject, and that you will be pleased to make such communications of it as may be necessary to forward the views of this Legislature."—*Patrick Henry to the President of Pennsylvania,* Feb. 23, 1786.

This convention met at Annapolis in September, 1786.

some circumstances which had occurred, I have been convinced since August, 1783 and gave it as my opinion at that time, if not officially to Congress as the sovereign, at least to a number of its members, that they might act accordingly. It is indeed evident to me, that they had it in contemplation to do this at the time of the Treaty; the expression of the Article which respects the evacuation of them, as well as the tenor of their conduct since relative to this business, is strongly marked with deception. I have not the smallest doubt but that every secret engine is continually at work to inflame the Indian mind, with a view to keep it at variance with these States, for the purpose of retarding our settlements to the Westward, and depriving us of the fur and peltry trade of that country.

Your assurances my dear Marquis, respecting the male and female Asses,[40] are highly pleasing to me, I shall look for them with much expectation and great satisfaction, as a valuable acquisition and important service.

The Jack which I have already received from Spain, in appearance is fine; but his late royal master, tho' past his grand climacteric, cannot be less moved by female allurements than he is; or when prompted, can proceed with more deliberation and majestic solemnity to the work of procreation. The other Jack perished at Sea.

Mr. Littlepage in his dispute with Mr. Jay seems to have forgot his former situation. It is a pity, for he appears to be a young man of abilities. At the next meeting of the Potomac Company (which I believe will not be 'till August) I will communicate to them your sentiments respecting the terms on which a good Ingénieur des ponts and chaussées may be had and take their opinion thereon.

[40] From the island of Malta.

The benevolence of your heart my Dr. Marqs. is so conspicuous upon all occasions, that I never wonder at any fresh proofs of it; but your late purchase of an estate in the colony of Cayenne, with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country; but I despair of seeing it. Some petitions were presented to the Assembly, at its last Session, for the abolition of slavery, but they could scarcely obtain a reading. To set them afloat at once would, I really believe, be productive of much inconvenience and mischief; but by degrees it certainly might, and assuredly ought to be effected; and that too by Legislative authority.

I give you the trouble of a letter to the Marqs. de St. Simon, in which I have requested to be presented to Mr. de Menonville. The favourable terms in which you speak of Mr. Jefferson gives me great pleasure: he is a man of whom I early imbibed the highest opinion. I am as much pleased, therefore, to meet confirmations of my discernment in these matters, as I am mortified when I find myself mistaken.

I send herewith the copies of your private Letters to me, promised in my last, and which have been since copied by your old aid. As Mrs. Washington and myself have both done ourselves the honor of writing to Madame de la Fayette, I shall not give you the trouble at this time of presenting my respects to her; but pray to accept every good wish which this family can render for your health and every blessing this life can afford you. I cannot conclude without expressing to you the earnest enquiries and ardent wishes of your friends (among whom, I claim to stand first) to see you in America, and of giving you repeated assurances of the sincerity of my friendship, and of the Affectionate regard with which I am etc.

P. S. I had like to have forgotten a promise which I made in consequence of the enclos'd application from Colo. Carter. It was, that I would write to you for the wolf hound if to be had conveniently: The inducements, and the services you would render by this act, will be more evident from the expression of the letter than from any thing I can say.

The vocabulary[41] for her imperial Majesty,[42] I will use my best endeavours to have compleated; but she must have a little patience, the Indian tribes on the Ohio are numerous, dispersed and distant from those who are most likely to do the business properly.[43]

*To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, May 12, 1786.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 6th. instt. but not inclining to take your surplus Wheat, on purchase, will order it to be ground and packed, subject to your order. As you did not direct what kind of flour it should be made into, it will be fine only, unless you should in time direct otherwise.

I lost very considerably by the delay of your Wheat. In the first of the Manufactury of it I had a brisk demand for my superfine flour at 40/. and 38/. per Barrl. and for that which has been lately ground I have not had more than 32/. offered, and this price for a small quantity only.

The inclosed was brought to me (under cover) by the person whose name is mentioned therein and with whom I have agreed. I am etc.[44]

[41] A vocabulary of the Shawano and Delaware Indians was compiled and forwarded two years later. (See Washington's letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Jan. 10, 1788, *post.*)

[42] The Empress of Russia.

[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[44] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

*To JOHN RUMNEY

Mount Vernon, May 15, 1786.

Sir: I am indebted to you for your favor of the 5th. of September, and to Messrs. Robinson, Sanderson and Rumney for their letter of the 28th. of Jany. in the present year. The last was accompanied with 1400 Flags, which came with very little brakages; and for your care of, and attention to which, I beg you to accept my sincere thanks.[45]

On the 18th. of Novr. I inclosed you a Bill on Wakelin Welch Esqr. of London for £50 Sterg.; and will, before Mr Sanderson leaves the Country, settle with him for the Ballance. It gives me pleasure to hear that we may soon expect to see you in this Country again. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.[46]

To WILLIAM FRISBIE FITZHUGH

Mount Vernon, May 15, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 13th. came to me this day. Particular attention shall be paid to the mares which your servant brought; and when my Jack is in the humour they shall derive all the benefits of his labours. At present, tho' young, he follows what one may suppose to be the example of his late Royal Master, who cannot, tho' past his grand climacteric, perform seldomer or with more majestic solemnity than he does. However I have my hopes that when he becomes a little better acquainted with republican enjoyments, he will amend his

[45] The following is noted in Washington's "Diary" under date of Monday, May 22, 1786: "Began to take up the pavement of the Piaza." May 23: "this day began to lay the Flags in my Piaza." May 27: "Finished laying 28 courses of the pavement in the Piaza."

[46] From a photostat of the original in the "Washington Photostats" in the Library of Congress.

manners and fall into our custom of doing business; if the case should be otherwise, I shall have no disinclination to present his Catholic Majesty with as valuable a present as I received from him.

I am very sorry to hear of the accident which befel Colo. Fitzhugh in his late trip to Virginia; but from the effect of the fall I hope he will soon be recovered. I am happy in having it in my power to furnish him with a bushel of the Barley requested in your letter. A propos, are there any persons in your neighbourhood who raise Lambs for sale? My stock of Sheep were so much neglected during my absence, that I would gladly buy one or two hundred ewe lambs, and allow a good price for them, in order to get it up again. A line from you when convenient, in answer to this query, would be obliging. Mrs. Washington and the rest of the family join me in every good wish for the Colo., his Lady and yourself. I am, etc.[47]

To GEORGE TAYLOR, JUNIOR[48]

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1786.

Sir: You will excuse me I hope for not having acknowledged the receipt of your favors of the 21st. and 25th. of Feby. at an earlier period. The truth is, I have been much hurried and a good deal from home since they came to this place.

I thank you for your obliging attention to the apples, which were very good, and arrived safely; and Mrs. Washington joins me in thanking you also for your kind present of pickled and fried Oysters,[49] which were very fine. This mark of your politeness is flattering, and we beg you to accept every good wish of ours in return. With esteem, I am, etc.[47]

[47] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[48] Of New York. He had been one of Varick's writers.
[49] The pickled and fried oysters were preserved in pots.

To ROBERT LEWIS & SONS

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1786.

Gentn: Waiting to be informed of what I stand indebted to you, is the cause of my not acknowledging sooner the receipt of your favor of the 24th. of May last year. I have now requested Colo. Biddle to enquire into, and to discharge what is due from me.

I feel myself very much obliged to you for the trouble you have had in obtaining a Miller for me. Mr. Davenport seems to be a very honest, good kind of man; but as a miller, and as a person skilled in the art of keeping a mill in order, I think him much inferior to Roberts. In these points perhaps Roberts had no superior; but his propensity to liquor, and his turbulent temper when under the intoxicating doses of it, were not to be borne. I have no trouble at all with Davenport; he is steady, orderly and quiet, and does, I believe, as well as he knows how. We have neither of us intimated any inclination to part; and if the reputation of my flour (which stood very high under Robert's management) can be maintained, it is all I want.

The Agreement which you entered into with him is perfectly satisfactory to me, and I thank you for your attention to the business. With great esteem, I am, etc.[50]

To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1786.

Dear Sir: Your favors of the 19th. of Feby. and 16th. and 19th. March, are before me; And would have been acknowledged Sooner, had anything material, occurred.

[50] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The Clover Seed, Boots &c. came in Season; but I must take care to be earlier in my application another year, as the Expence of getting heavy articles from Baltimore by land, comes high; I was charged forty odd Shillings for the Transportation of those Seeds, by the Stage, from that Place. I am nevertheless obliged to you for forwarding of them in that manner; as the delay would have rendered the Seeds useless for Spring Sowing, and altogether defective, perhaps, by the Fall. I am obliged to your Good Father for the Trouble he was at in choosing them, they are very good, and pray you, to Offer my Complts. and Thanks, to him therefore, and to Capt. Morris, for his kind present of a hunting horn, as I was unable to get One in Virginia, or at Baltimore.

If you Should not have purchased Young's Tour Through Great Britain, before this Reaches you, be pleased to decline doing it, as I have Just received a very Polite letter from that Gentleman, informing me of his having dispatched a Compleat Sett of his Works for my acceptance.

The Person in whose Name, the inclosed certificate, has Issued,[51] is owing me a considerable Sum, (indeed half the Flour, and Meal, for which the Certificate was granted, belonged to me) and having requested that it may be Sold for what it will fetch, and his part of the Money applied to my Credit, I pray you to do it accordingly; but at the Same time, I must desire, as Half the Property is my own, that if it Shall appear to you, to be for my Interest, that it Should be bought in again on my Accot., that you would do so. In either case, place the Amot. to my Credit in your Books, Subject to a future disposition.

I must be owing Messrs. Robt. Lewis & Sons (of Philada.) some Trifle, on Accot. of a Miller which they procured for me,

[51] A copy of the certificate which is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*, and dated May 18, 1785, shows that the United States owed Gilbert Simpson 339 dollars and 53/90ths of a dollar, with interest at 6% from Nov. 4, 1780.

last year, but have never yet been able to get their Accot. Be so good as to know what the Amot. is, and Pay it; the Inclosed Informs them thereof.

I have Such a number of Gazettes crouded upon me, (many without orders) that they are not only Expensive, but really useless; as my other avocations, will not allow me time to Read them oftentimes, and when I do attempt it, find them more troublesome, than Profitable, I have therefore to beg if you should get money into your hands, on Accot. of the Inclosed Certificate, that you would be so good as to pay what I am owing to Messrs. Dunlap & Claypole, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Humphreys.[52] If they consider me, however, as engaged for the year, I am content to let the matter run on, to the expiration of it; but as my Expences run high, it would be imprudent in me to encrease them unnecessarily.

I am in want of Glass (for a Particular purpose) and beg you to Send it to me, by the first opportunity, agreeably to the Inclosed Patterns, and Quantities.

Is Linnen to be had cheap, at the Vendues in Philadelphia, for ready Money? And at what price, could the best dutch, or Strip'd Blanketts, be bought by the piece, of 15 or 16 in each, which I think is the usual number? I may want 200 of them. My Compliments, in which Mrs. Washington Joins, are Offred to Mrs. Biddle, and I am, etc.[53] [H. S. P.]

To THE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mount Vernon, May 18, 1786.

Dear Sir: In due course of post, I have been honored with your favors of the 2d. and 16th. of March; since which I have

[52] Daniel Humphreys. He was publisher of the *Pennsylvania Mercury and Philadelphia Price-current.*

[53] In the writing of Tobias Lear.

been a good deal engaged and pretty much from home. For the enclosure which accompanied the first, I thank you. Mr. Littlepage seems to have forgot what had been his situation, forgot what was due to you, and indeed what was necessary to his own character: and his guardian, I think, seems to have forgotten every thing.[54]

I coincide perfectly in sentiment with you, my Dr. Sir, that there are errors in our national Government which call for correction, loudly I would add; but I shall find myself happily mistaken if the remedies are at hand. We are certainly in a delicate situation, but my fear is that the people are not yet sufficiently *misled* to retract from error. To be plainer, I think there is more wickedness than ignorance mixed in our Councils. Under this impression, I scarcely know what opinion to entertain of a general convention. That it is necessary to revise and amend the articles of confederation, I entertain *no* doubt; but what may be the consequences of such an attempt is doubtful. Yet something must be done, or the fabrick must fall, for it certainly is tottering.

Ignorance and design are difficult to combat. Out of these proceed illiberal sentiments, *improper* jealousies, and a train of evils which oftentimes, in republican governments, must be sorely felt before they can be removed. The former, that is ignorance, being a fit soil for the latter to work in, tools are employed by them which a generous mind would disdain to use; and which nothing but time, and their own puerile or wicked productions can show the inefficacy and dangerous tendency of. I think often of our situation and view it with concern. From the high ground we stood upon, from the plain path which invited our footsteps, to be so fallen! so lost! it is

[54] The Lewis-Littlepage controversy was merely a matter of personal irritation and of no public importance.

really mortifying; but virtue, I fear has, in a great degree, taken its departure from us; and the want of disposition to do justice is the source of the national embarrassments; for whatever guise or colorings are given to them, this I apprehend is the origin of the evils we now feel, and probably shall labour under for some time yet. With respectful complimts. to Mrs. Jay, and sentiments of sincere friendship, I am &c.[55]

To NEIL JAMIESON

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1786.

Sir: Messrs. Balfour and Barraud of Norfolk died indebted to me in a pretty considerable sum. Meeting with Mr. Newton a few days ago at Richmond,[56] he informed me that the books of that Company had been in the hands of a Mr. Schau deceased, to whom you were an Exor.; and that it was highly probable you could in this character, give me some clue by which I could recover my Debt; for he added, that he was certain money was due in and about Norfolk to Messrs. Balfour and Barraud, and might be obtained, if a list of the Debts cou'd be had.

My debt was contracted for flour sold these Gentlemen. This flour was for Mr. Hansbury of London, and there can be little doubt of their connexion in trade; but whether of such a nature as to make the latter liable for the debt, I am unable to say.

If my present application to you is improper, or likely to give you any trouble in affording me the requisite information, you will please to place the liberty I take, to a former acquaintance, and have the goodness to excuse it. I am, etc.[55]

[55] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[56] Washington went to Richmond in connection with some land purchases from Col. George Mercer. He left Mount Vernon, April 23; arrived at Richmond, April 26; left Richmond, April 28; and reached Mount Vernon, April 30.

To JOHN MARSDEN PINTARD

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1786.

Sir: Your favors of the 24th. of January and 5th. of Feby. are at hand; but I have heard nothing of the Vine slips mentioned therein, nor do I know where to direct my enquiries for them, as you do not mention the Port or State to which the Industry, Captn. Gibson was bound. For your good intentions however, I am as much indebted, as if the slips had actually been delivered to me.

It is to be hoped and much to be wished that the negotiations of Messrs. Barclay and Lamb,[57] at the Court of Morocco, and with the State of Algiers, may terminate favourably for America. Should they not, our trade will be exceedingly incommoded by the piratical States of the Mediterranian.

At present, thro' the early attention of Messrs. Jno. Searle & Co., and some others, (formerly my correspondents in Maderia) together with the purchases I have occasionally made in this Country since the re-establishment of peace, I am more than usually well stocked with Madeira Wine. I am, etc.[58]

To THOMAS RIDOUT

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1786.

Sir: Since my last dated the 20th. of August, I have been favored with your letters of the 31st. of Augt., 7th. of Septr. and 4th. of Novembr. in the past year.

The packages by the Peggy, Capt. Cuningham are safely arrived. I am sorry they should have given you any trouble, and am much obliged by your care of them.

[57] Thomas Barclay and John Lamb.

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I have paid Colo. Fitzgerald the full amount of the Wine and other articles wch. were sent to me by Captn. Smith; and am sorry to add that the quality of the Claret on proof, did not answer my expectation, and was far short of some other of the same cargo, wch. I had drank at other places. I ascribe this however, to chance; it may be my luck next time to get better, and therefore when your Vessel comes to this River again, I request that a gross of the best may be sent to me.

Excuse the liberty I take of addressing a packet containing papers of consequence, to your care for the Marqs. de la Fayette, and a barrel; to both of wch. I ask your particular attention. I am, etc.[59]

To HENRY L. CHARTON[60]

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1786.

Sir: The letter which you did me the favor to write to me from Philadelphia on the 5th inst:[61] came safely to hand, and I should have given it an earlier acknowledgment, had not frequent calls from home, and unavoidable business prevented it.

I do not perceive, upon recurring to the subject, that I can be more explicit in the description of my Lands on the Big Kanhawa, and on the Ohio between the two Kanhawas, than I was when I had the pleasure of seeing you at this place. If I recollect rightly I then informed you, that from the accounts given me of them by the Surveyor; from what I had seen of them myself, (especially the tract on the big Kanhawa) from every other source of information, and from my best knowledge and belief, there can be no finer land in that or any other Country; or lands more abounding in natural advantages.

[59] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[60] Or Chaston, or Le Chaston. The "Letter Book" addresses him as "Monst."
[61] Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

The whole of them are washed by the rivers I have mentioned, are furnished with land streams fit for water works of various kinds, stored with meadow ground wch. may be reclaimed in the cheapest and most expeditious manner imaginable, (by only cutting away trifling banks of earth, which have been formed by the Beaver) and abound in fish and wild fowl of all kinds, as well as every other sort of game with which the country is filled. With respect to the quality of the soil, it may be conceived that none can exceed it when I relate a single fact, namely, that it was the first choice of the whole country thereabouts, after a thorough research of it by an excellent judge, the late Colo. Crawford.

As to the situation of them, none can be more advantageous; for living about midway between the upper and lower settlements on the Ohio, the trade must pass within sight of those Lands, whilst the occupants of them, equally convenient to both might embrace the inland navigation of either Potomac or James river, as soon as they are made to communicate with the Western Waters; which no doubt will soon be effected. I think too, I should not be mistaken were I to add that 'ere long a town of some importance will be established in the vicinity of them, viz, at the confluence of the big Kanhawa and Ohio;[62] which is the point at which the trade to Richmond, and that which is carried to the northern parts of this State, and to Maryland and Pennsylvania, must separate. But to go into a more minute detail in writing of what has before been the subject of oral conversation, would be more tiresome than interesting; especially as it is by no means my wish that *any purchaser whatever,* should rely upon my accot. of this matter, or on those of any others, but judge for himself or themselves, in all things.

[62] Point Pleasant and Henderson are now at the mouth of the Great Kanawha, on either bank of the river.

When you asked me if I was disposed to sell these Lands, I answered and truly that I had never had it in contemplation, because I well knew they would rise more in value than the purchase money at the present time would accumulate by interest; consequently under these circumstances it would be difficult in the present moment to fix on a price which would be acceded to, that would be an equivalent for them hereafter. However as I had no family, wished to live easy and to spend the remainder of my days with as little trouble as possible, I said I would part with them if a good price could be obtained, and that my sense of their value might easily be ascertained by the terms on which I had proposed to rent them; (and which I think you told me you had seen). One of which amounting in fact to an absolute sale, being on a Lease of 999 years, renewable, was at ten pounds this currency per hundred acres, which at 5 pr Ct. (the legal interest in this State), would have come to 40/ like money pr. acre for the land on purchase; but I added, that if any one person, or sett of men would take the whole, I would make the terms of payment easy and abate considerably in the price. I therefore now inform you that the lands (the patents and plats of which I shewed you) the titles to which are uncontrovertible, free from those clashing interests and jarring disputes with which much of the property in that country is replete, are in quantities and situation as follows,

1st. 2314 on the Ohio river three or four miles below the mouth of the little Kanhawa.

2d. 2448 acres on the said river abt. sixteen miles below the former.

3d. 4395 acres on Ditto, just above the great bend in it, & below the other two.

4th. 10,990 on the big Kanhawa (West side) beginning within two or three miles of its conflux with the Ohio, and extending up the former 17 miles.

5th. 7,276 acres a little above this on the East side of the same river Kanhawa.

6th. 2,000 acres higher up the Kanhawa (west side) in the fork between Coal river and it.

7th. 2950 acres opposite thereto, on the East side. In all 32,373 acres on both rivers.

For these lands I would take Thirty thousand English guineas (of the proper weight) or other specie current in the country, at its equivalent value. Two thousand five hundred of which to be paid at the execution of the Deeds and the remainder in seven years therefrom, with an interest of five pr. Ct. pr. ann: regularly paid at my seat 'till the principal shall be discharged.

I am not inclined to part with any of these Lands, as an inducement to settle the rest. My mind is so well satisfied of the superior value of them to most others, that there remains no doubt on it of my obtaining my own terms, as the country populates and the situation and local advantages of them unfold. These terms have already been promulgated, but I have not a copy of them by me, or I could send it to you: they were inserted in Dunlaps & Claypooles Gazette about two years ago, at whose Office it is probable a copy might be had. One of the conditions was, if my memory serves me, an exemption from the payment of rent three years whilst the tenements were opening and improvements making; this I am still inclined to fulfill.

The rents were different according to the term for which leases were to be granted.

If for twenty one years only, they were to commence and end at £5 pr. hundred; for in that case the stipulated improvements being made, I knew that almost any rent might be had for the Tenement thereafter.

If on leases renewable every ten years forever, the rents were in that case to advance in a certain ratio, to keep pace with the encreasing value of the Land. And if given in the first instance for 999 yrs. as has been mentioned before, then the rent was to commence at ten pounds pr. hund. acres; which being in fact an alienation of the property, shewed my ideas of its present value and purchase money, as mentioned already. These, as far as I can recite from memory, were the terms on which I offered to rent, and from which I feel no disposition to relax; unless, as in the case of a purchase, some one or more persons would take the whole off my hands at once, and become responsible for the rent; in which case being influenced by similar principles, I might abate accordingly.

I should have great pleasure in giving such letters as you have asked, to the Marquis de la Fayette and Chevr. de la Luzerne, but conceive they could only have an embarrassing operation. It is certainly as consistent with the policy of one country to discourage depopulation, as it is for another to encourage emigration. Considering the matter in this point of view I cannot suppose, however well disposed either of the above gentlemen may be to serve this Country, that they would do it at the expence of, and perhaps hazard of censure from their own.

One of these gentlemen too being in the diplomatic or ministerial line would, undoubtedly, be very cautious in expressing a sentiment favorable to a business of this kind. My best wishes however will follow you thro' all the stages of it; and with esteem, I am, &c.

P. S. I shou'd be glad to know whether this letter found you in Philadelphia.[63]

[63] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM MOULTRIE

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The Letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write to me, of the 7th. ulto. came safely to hand; and I should feel very happy if I could render the Company (who are engaged in the laudable and important design of opening a cut between the Rivers Cowper and Santee) any services.

Mr. Brindley, nephew to the celebrated person of that name who conducted the work of the Duke of Bridgewater and planned many others in England, possesses, I presume, more *practical* knowledge of Cuts and Locks for the improvement of inland navigation, than any man among us, as he was an executive officer (he says) many years under his uncle in this particular business: but he is, I know, engaged with the Susquehanna company, who are I believe (for I saw Mr. Brindley about six weeks ago) in a critical part of their work. I have notwithstanding, written to a gentleman of my acquaintance who is not only a member of that Company, but one to whom the business is chiefly confided, and near the spot, to know if Mr. Brindley's services can be dispensed with long enough to answer the purposes mentioned in your letter: his answer shall be forwarded as soon as it comes to my hands.

It gives me pleasure to find a spirit for inland navigation prevailing so generally. No country is more capable of improvements in this way than our own, none which will be more benefited by them; and to begin well, as you justly observe, is all in all: error in the commencement will not only be productive of unnecessary expence, but, what is still worse, of discouragements. It appears to me therefore, that if the cost of bringing from Europe a professional man of tried and

acknowledged abilities, is too heavy for one work; it might be good policy for several Companies to unite in it; contributing in proportion to the estimates and capital sums established by the several Acts. I see no necessity for confining the services of such a person to a single undertaking, one man may plan for twenty to execute; and the distance from Delaware (between which and Chesapeak a cut is in contemplation and Commissioners appointed by the two States to agree on a plan) to the Cowper river is not so great but that one person of activity might design for all between them, and visit the whole three or four times a year.

This is only a thought of my own, I have no authority for suggesting it; but for my private satisfaction had written both to England and France, to know on what terms a person of competent skill could be obtained, and have received the following answer from my friend the Marqs. de la Fayette; "There is no doubt but what a good Engineer may be found in this country to conduct the work. France in this point exceeds England; and will have I think every advantage but that of the language, which is something, altho' it may be supplied by an Interpreter. An application from Mr. Jefferson and myself to the Ministry, and more particularly an intimation that you set a value on that measure, will ensure to us the choice of a good Engineer. They are different from the military ones, and are called Ingènieurs des ponts and chaussées. I think five hundred guineas a year while the business lasts, and an assurance not to loose his rank in France will be sufficient to provide you with the gentleman you want."

I have also received an acknowledgmt. of the letter I had written to England; but the Gentleman there goes no further than to assure me he will make every necessary enquiry, and has no doubt but that a person may be obtained. He says

nothing however respecting the terms on which he could be had. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments and every good wish for Mrs. Moultree and yourself. With great esteem and respect, I am, etc.[64]

To SAMUEL POWEL

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1786.

Dear Sir: The Letter which you did me the honor to write to me on the 10th. inst: came safely to hand, and claims my particular acknowledgments and thanks.

When I beheld the trouble I had given you, in the long transcript from the essay on the farmyard, I was quite ashamed of the request I had made; but having no just plea to offer as an apology for doing so, I will rely on your goodness rather than a lame excuse, for pardon.

The Society,[65] in my opinion, have judged rightly in determining to continue their premium for the best Barn-yard; for whatever merits Colo. Morgan's Essay may have, something yet more perfect may be hit upon; and this being, as you justly observe, the basis of all good husbandry, too much encouragement cannot be given to men of ingenuity and industry, to turn their thoughts to an object of this magnitude, to induce endeavors to improve it.

It is from such attention as these, by similar societies, that Agriculture has been brought to the perfection it now is in England; and this certainly is the readiest path by which we can arrive at it here. Practices founded on experiments, and approved by these societies, are the best touch stones, and will prove our guide and director in all cases whatsoever.

[64] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[65] The Agricultural Society of Philadelphia, Pa.

Will Mrs. Powel never visit her friends on James River? Is it necessary to add how happy she and you would make Mrs. Washington and myself, to set this down as a halting place? If it was I would add the most unequivocal assurances of it. We unite in every good wish for you both, and I am, etc.[66]

To ALEXANDER STEEL

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1786.

Sir: As I have no information of Doctr. Shiell's[67] death, nor any connexion with his family or affairs; I return the letter which you sent me for him (and which came to hand last night only) unopened. The Doctr. married a lady of Newtown in Pennsylvania, a Miss Harris, and had connexions, I believe, in trade with some gentn. in the City of Philada., but with whom they were formed, I am unable to inform you.

Altho' I have no doubt but that the Account, rendered by you of your services and sufferings, is literally true; yet as they did not happen to fall within my own knowledge, there would be an impropriety in my certifying them. Indeed it has always been a maxim with me, to grant Certificates to no officers in a subordinate character, who did not apply thro' the Colonel and genl. officer under whom they had served; or from the head of the department in which they had acted if in the staff; the presumption being, tho' the fact in some instances might be otherwise, that I could only be acquainted with their characters and conduct thro' one or the other of these channels. Congress have not, I believe, made provision for losses of property sustained in the course of the War, instances of which are without number; but for invalids and

[66] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[67] Dr. Sheal, of Philadelphia. He removed to Kentucky and died there.

those who have been disabled they have, I believe, where the regular modes pointed out by their Resolves, have been pursued, made allowances, but what, or how to come at them, I am unable to inform you, as this business never went thro' my hands. I am, etc.[68]

To JOSEPH JONES

Mount Vernon, May 25, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: I have been favored with, and thank you for your letter of the 14th inst: The reasons which you have been at the trouble to assign for the Executive's not calling the Assembly at an earlier period than the annual meeting, are very satisfactory; and I am much obliged to you for the recital of them, for I confess to you that I was not only among the number of those who expected this event, but under the publication of Congress of the 15th. of Feby. and my want of information of the precise state of matters in other States, was among those also who could not account for the postponement. It will always give me pleasure to hear from you, because it will afford me fresh occasion for assuring you of the sincere esteem, etc.[68]

To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, May 26, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Inclosed you have Peter Kirwins receipt for fifty barrels of superfine flour, which I beg you to sell to the best advantage, and remit what may be due to me, after deducting what I am owing to you.

Twenty four of these fifty barrels are inspected; the others, tho' of equal quality, are not. The reason is, the bearer calling

[68] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

unexpectedly, and being in a hurry, would not allow time to get the Inspectors from Alexandria; I was obliged therefore to send them without, or miss the conveyance; the former I preferred, as I have been some time on the enquiry for a Vessel. The quality of the uninspected, my miller assures me, is at least equal to the inspected, being quite fresh. With esteem and regard, I am, etc.[69]

To JOSEPH BROWN[70]

Mount Vernon, May 30, 1786.

Sir: I have been favored with your letter of the 12th. of September,[71] and thank you for the prints which accompanied it, by the Ship Potomac which arrived safely. The frames of these pictures are quite equal to my wishes, and you will please to accept my best acknowledgments of it; and assurances that an apology for their being inferior to those sent to Congress, was altogether unnecessary.

It gives me concern to learn from yourself, that the late war has been so injurious to your income, and so destructive of your hopes. By best wishes will attend any plan you may adopt for the perfect restoration of both. Of the obliging expressions of your letters, as they respect myself, I have a grateful sense, and am,[69]

*AGREEMENT WITH JAMES BLOXHAM

[Mount Vernon] May 31, 1786.

Articles of Agreement entered into this 31st. day of May in the year 1786 between George Washington Esqr. of the County

[69] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*
[70] Of Islington, near London.
[71] Not now found in the *Washington Papers.*

of Fairfax and Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part, and James Bloxham lately from the Shire of Gloucester in the Kingdom of England Farmer of the other part. Witnesseth, That the said James Bloxham for and in consideration of the wages, allowances, and priviledges hereinafter mentioned, doth agree with, and oblige himself to serve, the said George Washington for the space of one year; to commence the first day of the present Month, in the capacity of a Farmer and Manager of such parts of Husbandry, as shall be committed to his charge; and will, to the utmost of his skill and abilities, order and direct the same (with the approbation of the said George Washington) to the best advantage. That he will, at all times, and upon all occasions, suggest such plans for the improvement of the said Washingtons Farms, and the stocks of Horses, Cattle, Sheep, Hogs &ca. which are on them, as to him shall appear most conducive to his interest. Will keep regular Accts. of the said Stock, and will strictly observe and follow all such orders and directions as he shall, from time to time, receive from his said employer; for this, and for other purposes. That when thereunto required, he will buy, at the expence of the said Washington, Cattle or Sheep for feeding, or for Store; and will dispose of the same, or any others, to the best advantage; attending particularly to the care and management of the Stock of every kind, both in Winter and Summer, as well those for the use and benefit of the Farms, and for family consumption, as those which may be fatted for Market. That he will use his utmost endeavours to encrease, and properly distribute, the Manure in the farms; and also will improve to the best of his judgment, the impliments of husbandry necessary thereto, and will instruct, as occasion may require, and opportunity offer, the labourers therein how to Plow, Sow, Mow, reap, Thatch, Ditch, Hedge &ca. in the best manner. And generally, That he

will consider the said Washingtons interest as his own, and use his true endeavour to promote it accordingly. In consideration whereof, the said George Washington doth agree to pay the said James Bloxham Fifty Guineas for his years Services, to be compleated on the first day of May 1787; and will allow him the said Bloxham, ten guineas besides, towards defraying the expences of bringing his wife and family to this Country. That when they shall have arrived, he will provide him, and them, a decent and comfortable House to reside in, by themselves; will lend them two Cows for Milk, a Sow to raise Pigs for their own eating (but not to sell), and give them as much Bran as is sufficient to brew Beer for his family, use. And moreover, will allow them for the part of the year which will remain after the arrival of his family and leaving his present board, at the rate of Six hundred pounds of Porke or Beef, and Eight hundred pounds of middling flour, per Annum, and likewise a piece of ground sufficient for a Garden, and firewood. The said George Washington also agrees to provide the said James Bloxham with a horse to ride on for the purpose of superintending the business herein required. or, if the said Bloxham shall find his own horse, to allow pasturage, and reasonable feed for him. Lastly, it is agreed between the said George Washington and James Bloxham, that if the said James should not return to England at the expiration of the year for which he now engages, and his conduct shall be such as to merit the approbation of the said George Washington, that then, and in those cases, his wages for the next year shall be Sixty Guineas; and the other allowances and privileges the same as those of the present year. In testimony of all, and each of these Articles, and for the full and perfect compliance therewith, the parties to these presents hath interchangeably set their hands and Seals, and to the other, doth bind himself in the Sum of One hundred pounds Currt. Money of Virginia, the day and year first written.

To THE SECRETARY AT WAR

Mount Vernon, June 1, 1786.

My dear Sir: The Post of last week brougt. me (by way of New York) a letter,[72] of which the inclosed is a Copy. I transmit it, not only for your perusal, but for information, and advice. All the papers respecting the Society of the Cincinnati being in possession of the Secretary Genl. or the Assistant Secretary, and my memory very defective, I cannot speak with precision to Mr. Jefferson, or decide on any thing which is pleasing to myself. From what I can recollect of the matter, all the Officers who chose to make use of Major L'Enfant's Agency to obtain the badge of the Society, not only commissioned him to bring them from France, but furnished him with the means.

I did this myself for 6 or 8. He brought many more. I have some reason to believe on a speculating Scheme; and demanded so much for them, as, if my Memory serves me, to disgust many Members of the Society, and induce them to apply to an Artist in Philadelphia, who, it was said, would not only execute them as well, (and without the defect which was discovered in the French ones,) but furnish them cheaper.

This and L'Enfant's misapplication of the money (if the fact is so) for those he did receive, may have been the Sources

[72] Jefferson's letter to Washington, misdated Jan. 17, 1785, when it should have been 1786, states that "the person who furnished the badges for the Cincinnati," that is, the jeweler Francastel in Paris, had not been paid by Major L'Enfant although he delivered the "eagles" to him. "Count Rochambeau has written to Major L'Enfant, and the answer is that he has never received the whole, nor expects to be able to collect it, and that being without resources he is obliged, as fast as he collects it, to apply it to his own sustenance. Count Rochambeau told the workman he would pay for the badges delivered him for the French officers (I think he said about 40 in number) but that for the others he must apply to the Marquis de la fayette and Count d'Estaing. As L'Enfant's letter gives room to suppose a misapplication of these monies, and in the meantime the honour of American officers stands committed, and in danger of being [mutilated] publicly. I thought it my duty to apprise you of this, that you may [mutilated] such measures herein as you think best." A press copy of this letter is in the *Jefferson Papers* under date of Jan. 17, 1785. Lafayette paid for the "eagles" and was, later, reimbursed by the Society.

of the present difficulty. On the one hand, it will be very disagreeable to the American Officers to be freely spoken of on this occasion. On the other, it may not only be hard but distressing to comply with the demands of the Parisian Artisan, as we are not only unacquainted with the extent, but in some measure with the nature of them. What is become of L'Enfant? I have not seen him since the general Meeting of the Society which was held at Philadelphia in May 1784, nor, that I recollect, have heard of him 'till Mr. Jefferson's Letter came to hand.

Mrs. Washington joins me in every affectionate wish for Mrs. Knox, yourself, and family. And with sentiments of the warmest friendship. I am etc.

[By forwarding the inclosed letter you will oblige.][73]

[MS. H. S.]

To MRS. MARY BRISTON

Mount Vernon, June 2, 1786.

Madam: Though small were the Services I rendered you, consequent of your first application to me; yet it behoves me to add, in answer to your favor of the 15th. of December last, that it was all I then had, or now have it in my power to offer. For having no share in the Legislative or Executive concerns of this Country, I could do no more than to bring your Petition before the former. This I did by a letter to the Governour inclosing it. What the ultimate determination of the Assembly was, respecting this matter, I am unable with precision, to inform you. Generally, I was given to understand, that however hard the case might appear to be, it was to be ascribed to the nature of the contest in which we had been oppressively involved, and tho' to be lamented as a Misfortune, was not

[73] In the writing of Tobias Lear. The sentence in brackets is in the writing of Washington.

to be attributed as a fault in the justice of this Country, since it was difficult, if not impracticable to draw a line between the promoters, and actors, and innocent Victims, of the War, in a national point of view. How far the reasoning is good I shall not take upon me to decide; but with much truth may assure you that I can readily enter into your feelings on this occasion, and sincerely wish that those who were the contrivers and abetters were alone to be the Sufferers by the War. I have the honor to be, etc.[74]

To THOMAS RINGGOLD TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, June 4, 1786.

Sir: I have to acknowledge the politeness of the offer contained in your letter of the 26th. ulto., and to thank you for the disinterestedness of it.

I shall have no scruple when occasion occurs to accept (in the small way I am in) the services you obliging you tender me, as proofs of my sensibility for your kindness, and as a testimony of my regard for the memory of your deceased brother,[75] who I knew took pleasure in obliging me by acts of this nature. With great esteem, I am, etc.[76]

To DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER

Mount Vernon, June 4, 1786.

Dear Sir: The Letter with which you favored me on the 24th. ulto. and the enclosures,[77] came to my hands by the last post,

[74] In the writing of Tobias Lear. From the original in the British Museum *Additional Manuscript* 9828.

[75] Tench Tilghman.

[76] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[77] The enclosure was the 25 pp. 12° pamphlet containing the report of the Intendant, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, and the action of the Maryland House. The letter and enclosure are in the *Washington Papers*.

and I thank you for the information I have received from them. The Committee, by its Report, seemed disposed to run you hard; but happily the House viewed matters in a different light, and rendered you the tribute of applause which was due to your services; which, as every circumstance that can contribute to your honor or satisfaction, has afforded me much pleasure, being Dr. Sir, etc.[78]

To JAMES TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1786.

Dear Sir: I have just had the honour to receive your favour of the 26th ulto. Of all the numerous acquaintances of your lately deceased son,[79] and amidst all the sorrowings that are mingled on that melancholy occasion, I may venture to assert (that excepting those of his nearest relatives) none could have felt his death with more regret than I did because no one entertained a higher opinion of his worth, or had imbided sentiments of greater friendship for him than I had done.

That you, Sir, should have felt the keenest anguish for this loss, I can readily conceive, the ties of parental affection united with those of friendship, could not fail to have produced this effect. It is however a dispensation the wisdom of which is inscrutable, and amidst all your grief there is this consolation to be drawn, that while living, no man could be more esteemed, and since dead, none more lamented than Col. Tilghman.

As his correspondence with the Comee. of New York is not connected with any transactions of mine, so, consequently, it is not necessary that the Papers to which you allude should compose part of my public documents; but if they stand single, as they exhibit a trait of his public character, and like all the

[78] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[79] Col. Tench Tilghman. He died on Apr. 18, 1786.

rest of his transactions will, I am persuaded, do honor to his understanding and probity, it may be desirable, in this point of view, to keep them alive by mixing them with mine; which, undoubtedly, will claim the attention of the Historian, who, if I mistake not, will upon an inspection of them, discover the illiberal ground on which the charge mentioned in the extract of the letter you did me the honor to inclose me is founded. That a calumny of this kind had been reported, I knew; I had laid my acct. for the calumnies of anonymous scribblers; but I never before had conceived that such an one as is related, could have originated with, or have met the countenance of Captn Asgill, whose situation often filled me with the keenest anguish; I felt for him on many accts. and not the least, when viewing him as a man of honor and sentiment, how unfortunate it was for him that a wretch who possessed neither, should be the means of causing in him a single pang, or a disagreeable sensation, My favourable opinion of him however is forfeited if, being acquainted with these reports, he did not immediately contradict them. That I could not have given countenance to the insults which *he says* were offered to his person, especially the *grovelling* one of erecting a Gibbet before his prison window, will I expect, readily be believed when I explicitly declare that, I never heard of a single attempt to offer an insult, and that I had every reason to be convinced that he was treated by the officers around him, with all the tenderness and every civility, in their power, I would fain ask Captn. Asgill how he could reconcile such belief (if his mind had been seriously impressed with it) to the continual indulgences, and procrastinations he had experienced? He will not, I presume deny that, he was admitted to his parole within 10 or 12 miles of the British lines, if not to a formal Parole, to a confidence yet more unlimited, by being permitted,

for the benefit of his health, and recreation of his mind, to ride, not only about the Cantonment, but into the surrounding country for many miles, with his friend and companion Maj. Gordon, constantly attending him. Would not these indulgences have pointed a military character to the fountain from which they flowed? Did he conceive that discipline was so lax in the American Army as that *any* officer *in it* could have granted these liberties to a Person confined by the express order of the Commander in chief unless authorized to do so by the same authority? and to ascribe them to the interference of Count de Rochambeau, is as void of foundation as his other conjectures; for I do not recollect that a sentence ever passed between that General and me, directly, or indirectly, on the subject, I was not without suspicions after the final liberation and return of Captn. Asgill to New York that his mind had been improperly impressed or [that he was defective in politeness. The treatment he had met with, in my conception, merited an acknowledgement, none however was offered, and I never sought for the cause.

This concise acct. of the treatment of Captn. Asgill is given from a hasty recollection of the circumstances. If I had had time, and it was essential, by unpacking my papers and recurring to authentic files, I might have been more pointed, and full. It is in my power at any time to convince the unbiassed mind that my conduct through the whole of this transaction was neither influenced by passion, guided by inhumanity, or under the controul of any interference whatsoever. I essayed everything to save the innocent and bring the guilty to punishment, with what success the impartial world must and hereafter certainly will decide. With very great esteem, etc.][80]

[80] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. The portion in brackets is from a facsimile of the original in Washington's writing, from a sales catalogue, 1929.

*To JOHN RUMNEY

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1786.

Sir: Since my last of the 15th. of May to Messrs. Robertson Sanderson and Rumney, I have been favoured with your letter of the 16th. of April by Captn. Aitkinson. The cost of the Flags is finally settled, with other articles had from your store in Alexandria; and I again thank you for the trouble you have had in this business, more so, as neither Commissions nor freight are charged, nor would be received, although I am very willing, and offered to pay both to Mr. Sanderson.

The Flags came very reasonably and will answer my purposes very well, though the workman did not keep to the sample in two or three respects, particularly in the thickness, and dressing of the Stones; some not being more than ¾ of an inch thick (scarcely that on one side) and none with the same polish of the pattern: enough however may be picked out of the whole to floor my Gallery which is all I wanted. With great esteem and regard, I am etc.[81]

To JOHN FITZGERALD

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Whatever number of servants you and Colo. Gilpin may think it advisable to purchase in behalf of the Potomac Company from the Ship which is just gone up, will meet my approbation; and I shall readily concur with you in price. There is a Black smith on board highly recommended, and one or two stone masons which may be useful at our works.

Have you received any precise account of the appearance or effect of the late fresh, at the great Falls? From the swell of

[81] From a photostat of the original in the "Washington Photostats" in the Library of Congress.

the water and quantity of drift wood at this place, I am led to believe that it must have exceeded in height, any within the memory of man; which makes me anxious to hear from our works.

If there is anything which may require a meeting of the Directors, it would be convenient for me to attend (at any hour which may be named) on Wednesday next. I am, etc.[82]

To WILLIAM FRISBIE FITZHUGH

Mount Vernon, June 5, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Your favor of the 26th. ulto. from Baltimore did not reach me 'till the 2d. inst: I will take the ewe lambs at the price they are offered by Mr. Reynolds; but not knowing the age of them, or when it may be proper to remove them, will wait 'till I hear from you again before I send, which may be when the mares are taken from this; and when I send, the money shall also go for Mr. Reynold's Lambs, and others, if more can be added to them of good quality, at the same price.

My Jack has favored one of your mares with a cover; which, with three others, is the sum total of his performances to this time. I do not intend to withhold my own mares more than three days longer from Magnolio, in expectation of the Jacks serving them. If Colo. Fitzhugh should incline to let his other mare (if the Jack should not come to) go to the same horse, he shall be heartily welcome to the use of him. With very great esteem I am, etc.[82]

To BENJAMIN LINCOLN

Mount Vernon, June 7, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Inclosed is a copy of my last to you, soon after writing which I heard of Doctr. Gordon's sailing. Not know-

[82] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

ing who his agent is, I again take the liberty of putting under this cover, the second Bill of exchange for him, and the original subscription paper on which the eleven pounds arose as part of the Bill (just mentioned) for forty two pounds which was the amount of both the Alexandria and Fredericksburgh subscriptions. As I have passed my receipts to the gentlemen who collected the money at the places above named; I wish the Doctors Agent, or Attorney if he has appointed one, would acknowledge the receipt of the Bill to me.

Mr. Lear arrived here a few days ago, and appears to be a genteel, well-behaved young man; he delivered me your letter, in consequence of which I applied to, and have received a promise from Charles Lee Esqr. (brother to the Colonel) to furnish him with such Law Books as he may have occasion for. I wish you success in your Passamaquady undertaking, and with sentiments of very great esteem and regard, am, etc.[83]

To THOMAS BEDWELL

Mount Vernon, June 7, 1786.

Sir: Your letter of the 27th. ulto. with the patterns enclosed, I have received. I am sorry for the misfortunes which you have met with in the course of your business, and heartily wish that your future attempts to carry on any useful manufactory, may succeed; but I think Sir, that it would be presumption in me to recommend to any gentleman in the State of South Carolina, a person from Philada. with whom I have no acquaintance, and of whose abilities in his business I have not a complete knowledge. I might with more propriety, venture to do it in my neighbourhood, or in this State, than in South Carolina, but even here, I should not feel myself perfectly

[83] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

justified in doing it. Letters from some Gentlemen in Philadelphia to their friends in So. Carolina would, in my opinion, be more suitable, and have their proper effect. You will have my best wishes for the success of any attempt that may prove useful and beneficial to the country. I am, etc.[84]

To CHARLES McIVER

Mount Vernon, June 7, 1786.

Sir: I received your letter of the 5th. inst. together with the MSS. and other papers sent with it, which I have returned.

It gives me pleasure to see any attempts made towards improving literature and science, more especially when they tend to the immediate and particular advantage of this country, and I should always wish to encourage and promote them; but I cannot with propriety enter into your plan, and offer you the encouragement you desire, as I am not so well acquainted with your character and abilities as many Gentlemen in Alexandria undoubtedly are, who will have an opportunity of attending your lectures, which I shall not; and are capable of giving your plan every encouragement which it deserves. I am, etc.

P. S. As the patterns and drawings may be useful to you on some other occasion, I return them.[84]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, June 8, 1786.

My Dr. Marqs. You would be surprised at the old date of the letter herewith sent you, were I not to tell you that the vessel which carries it was to have sailed agreeably to the date,

[84] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

and by information was to do so every day since. Nothing new has occurred since it was written, nor should I have given you the trouble of a seasons letter by the same ship, had I not forgotten to mention in my last that Mrs. Washington had packed and sent for Madame de la Fayette's acceptance, a barrel of Virginia Hams. I do not know that they are better, or so good as you make in France, but as they are of our own manufacture (and you know the Virginia Ladies value themselves on the goodness of their bacon), and we recollect that it is a dish of which you are fond, she prevailed on me to ask your's and Madame de la Fayette's acceptance of them.

I wanted to have accompanyed them with an anchor of old peach brandy, but could not provide any which I thought of such a quality as would do credit to the distillery of this liquor, and therefore sent none; and after all, both perhaps would have been better furniture for your Canteens on a long wet march, than for your table in Paris. It is unnecessary to repeat the assurances of the affection and regard with which I am, etc.[85]

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, June 10, 1786.

Dear Sir: I cannot omit so good an opportunity as Mr. Wallace affords, of addressing a few lines to you; altho' from the barrenness of the times I have little to say.

Our Country is at present in peace, and measures are pursuing to give adequate powers to Congress to form such a commercial system as shall pervade equally every branch of the Union; without which we are unable to meet European powers on equal ground, and our trade with them will continue under many disadvantages.

[85] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

I begin to despair (the season being so far advanced) of the pleasure of seeing you in Virginia this year; unless, instead of a Spring Voyage, you should incline to make an autumnal one. It would be but a repetition of former assurances were I to add, that I should be happy to see you in either, when ever your convenience and the affairs of Ireland will permit.

I little expected when I wrote you last, that Tharpe[86] was to be the principal workman in the ornamental parts of my new room. I had not, at that time, even heard of his arrival in this country; but having engaged one Rawlins of Baltimore in Maryland (lately from England) to finish it, I found when he had brought his men and tools here, that Tharpe had been contracted with and was the person on whom Rawlins depended for the execution of the plan on which we had, two or three months before, agreed. To this man I objected 'till it became evident that it must be him, or no work; there being no other, Rawlins said, competent to the undertaking. This being the case, and the inconvenience of laying another year out of the room being great, I consented to try him on condition that Rawlins, who I believe has left off work, himself should superintend it closely. Tharpe has been here now, more than six weeks, and hitherto has demeaned himself soberly and well. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor, etc.[87]

To GOVERNOR WILLIAM MOULTRIE

Mount Vernon, June 14, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Since I had the honor of writing to your Excellency last, I have been favored with the enclosed from Mr. Hughes, in answer to mine respecting Mr. Brindley. If you Sir, or the

[86] Richard Tharp (Tharpe).
[87] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Board of Directors of the So. Carolina canal, should incline to return the answer requested and will commit it to my care; I will be particularly attentive to it, as I shall have pleasure in obliging you, or them. I have the honor, etc.[88]

To HENRY LEE

Mount Vernon, June 18, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Under cover of your favor of the 21st. of April, which came duly to hand, was a letter from Arthur Young Esquire, (Author of the tours thro' England and Ireland, with his observations on the Husbandry of those Kingdoms) informing me that he had sent me a compleat sett of all his works. As these have never yet come to hand, nor any advice of them, you would do me a favor (if you can recollect of whom you received the letter) by enquiring whether it was, or was not accompanied with a parcel. Mr. Young's account is, that these Books were sent to the care of Mr. Athaws, mercht. of London: but why Mr. Athaws should send the letter without the parcel, or *either* by way of New York, I cannot readily conceive; as there are vessels from London passing my door (the situation of which is well known to him) every day.

The winter and Spring has been exceedingly opposed to our works at the great Falls; the incessant rains often preventing, and at all times retarding the removal of earth. The latter rains in May which were continued for more than twenty days, have produced very calamitous effects in this country: half the wheat, (some say much more) and three fourths of the rye, are blasted, and the ground surcharged to that degree with water as to have rendered ploughing impracticable, which has involved the Indian corn *which did come up,* so much in weeds

[88] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

and grass as to leave a melancholy prospect in level lands, of this crop also.

The advantages with which the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James are pregnant, must strike every mind that reasons upon the subject; but there is, I perceive, a diversity of sentiment respecting the benefits and the consequences, which may flow from the free and immediate use of the Mississippi. My opinion of this matter has been uniformly the same, and no light in which I have been able to consider the subject is likely to change it. It is, neither to relinquish nor to push our claim to this navigation; but in the mean while to open *all* the communications which nature has afforded, between the Atlantic States and the Western Territory, and to encourage the use of them to the utmost. In my judgment it is a matter of very serious concern to the well being of the former, to make it the interest of the latter to trade with them; without which, the ties of consanguinity which are weakening every day will soon be no bond, and we shall be no more a few years hence to the inhabitants of that country, than the British and Spaniards are at this day; not so much indeed, because commercial connexions, it is well known, lead to others, and united, are difficult to be broken; and these must take place with the Spaniards, if the navigation of the Mississippi is opened.

Clear I am that it would be for the interest of the Western settlers, as low down the Ohio as the Big Kanhawa, and back to the Lakes, to bring their produce thro' one of the channels I have named; but the way must be cleared, and made easy and obvious to them, or else the ease with which people glide down stream will give a different bias to their thinking and acting. Whenever the new States become so populous and so extended to the westward, as really to need it, there will be no power which can deprive them of the use of the Mississippi. Why

then should we prematurely urge a matter, which is displeasing and may produce disagreeable consequences, if it is our interest to let it sleep? It may require some management to quiet the restless and impetuous spirity of Kentucke, of whose conduct I am more apprehensive in this business, than I am of all the opposition that will be given by the Spaniards. Mrs. Washington and George and his wife join me in compliments and good wishes to your lady. With great esteem &c.[89]

To MRS. SAMPSON DARRELL

June 18, 1786.

Madam: A tract of land which I bought of Captn. Johnston (your deceas'd husband) lying on Bullskin in Frederick (now Berkeley) county, is, as well as a great many others, comprehended in the judgment lately obtained in the General Court in favor of the Hites; but may, it is said, be relieved from the consequences if it shall appear that this land was originally purchased from Hite. That the fact is so there can be no doubt, but the difficulty lies in proving it. It would seem by some papers in my hands that Captn. Johnston bought this land, wch. he sold me from one Lewis Thomas; and that Lewis Thomas bought it of old Jost Hite, father of the present complainants, who passed his Bond for the conveyance; which bond it further appears was assigned to Captn. Johnston. Now, if this bond is to be found among the papers of Captn. Johnston, for I have it not, it will render null and void the claim of the Hites; unless it may be for the original purchase money (which was very trifling), if it cannot be proven that it has been paid.

But if this bond is not in being, it is highly probable the Land will be lost.

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

The person to whom I sold this land is now calling upon me, this will oblige me in turn to resort to the representatives of Capt. Johnston of whom I purchased, and whose Deeds to me warrant it against the claim of every person whatsoever. But all these difficulties (except as to the original sum, which was to have been paid by Lewis Thomas to Hite) may be avoided if you fortunately should find among Captain Johnston's papers, the original bond from Hite to Thomas for conveyance of the land. It is for this reason I give you the trouble of the present application.

I am informed that commissioners are to meet some day this month, to receive such evidence as can be offered in favor of the present possessors of the land, without which the judgment will be final, I therefore pray that diligent search may be made for Hites Bond, which may prevent a heavy loss, as the land, with the improvements thereon, is now become very valuable. I am, etc.[90]

To PIERRE FRANÇOIS COZETTE

Mount Vernon, June 19, 1786.

Sir: The Letter which you did me the honor of writing to me, of the 5th. of Feby., I have received. I am highly oblig'd to you for the compliment which you pay me in desiring my acceptance of a portrait of Lewis the fifteenth, on horse back, which [was] done by you and is at your disposal.

I have not the least doubt Sir, but that the performance does honor to your abilities, and I join with you in wishing that it might be placed in some public and conspicuous situation, where the world could be gratified by seeing the picture of a good King, and where the merit of the performer meet with the applause which is due to it. Upon this principle Sir, (though I feel a grateful sense of the honor which you intended

[90] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

me) I must beg leave to decline the acceptance of it, as it could not here be placed in that conspicuous point of view which would do it justice. I am, etc.[91]

To NICHOLAS PIKE[92]

Mount Vernon, June 20, 1786.

Sir: Your letter of the 25th. of March did not come to hand 'till lately, or it should have had an earlier acknowledgment.

It gives me the highest satisfaction to find the Arts and sciences making a progress in any Country; but when I see them advancing in the rising States of America, I feel a peculiar pleasure, and in my opinion, every effort of genius and all attempts towards improving useful knowledge ought to meet with encouragement in this Country. Your performance is of the most useful and beneficial kind, and from the opinion of those Gentlemen who have inspected it, I have not the least doubt but that it is a very valuable one.

I feel a grateful sense of the honor which you designed me by wishing to dedicate your Book[93] to me, and would even sacrifice my own ideas of propriety respecting the matter, so far as to comply with your request, if I thought that by a non-compliance I should discourage, so good a work. But Sir, as there are several characters in your part of the country who deservedly hold a high rank in the literary world, and whose names would add dignity to such performance; it would be more proper (if I might presume to offer my opinion upon the matter) to dedicate your book to them.

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[91] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On June 19 Washington wrote also to Comte de Grouchet, referring his application for membership in the Society of the Cincinnati to the Society in France. This letter is entered in the "Letter Book."

[92] New Hampshire teacher and arithmetician.

[93] *A New and Complete System of Arithmetic, Composed for the Use of the Citizens of the United States*, published in 1788.

I must therefore beg leave to decline the honor which you would do me, as I have before done in two or three cases of a similar kind.

With the sincerest wishes for the success of your work, and much esteem, I am, etc.[94]

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, June 20, 1786.

My Dr. Humphreys: Your letter from New York (as did the proceeding one from London) came duly to hand, and claim my particular acknowledgments. On your return to America I sincerely congratulate you, and shall rejoice to see you at this place, which soon expecting shall add little at this time.

The only end of this letter is to assure you, that you will have *no* occasion for Horses, for mine will always be at your service; and very little for a servant, as your old acquaintance Will, who is scarcely fit for anything else, can whiten your head, and many idlers about the house can blacken your shoes. But in the latter case I entreat you to be governed altogether by your inclination and convenience.

Not knowing to what place to direct for you, I send this letter under cover to Colo. Lee.

Mrs. Washington, and George and his wife join me in every good wish for you, and I am, etc.[94]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, June 21, 1786.

Dear Sir: Enclosed is a copy of my last. It is so long since it was dispatched (without an acknowledgment of it) that I

[94] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

begin to fear some accident must [*sic*] happened, altho' it was sent to the Post Office in Alexandria by a very safe hand. Should this be the case, I pray you to notify the Office of the loss of the Certificate which was inclosed, that neither principal nor interest may be paid to the bearer till an investigation of his, or her claim to it, is first had. For this reason I send you an exact copy of the certificate, taken from the original before it was inclosed and wish that every proper step may be taken to recover it.

Not being able to discover how the letter should get lost, and still hoping it is not, I do not, at this time, send you patterns for the glass then required, but will do so if necessary as soon as I hear from you. I am etc. [H.S.P.]

To JOSEPH DASHIELL[95]

Mount Vernon, June 21, 1786.

Sir: I thank you for requesting a skipper from the Eastern shore to call upon, and make me an offer of the posts and rails he had for sale. They were not however of a kind to answer my purposes (being for paling), nor should I incline to buy any unless they are *better* and are to be had *cheaper* than those wch. might be taken from my own land. To judge of the propriety of this, you wou'd oblige me Sir, by informing me on what terms Cypress posts 7 feet long, 5 inches by 6 at top, and 7 inches by 6 at bottom; (a stock a foot square making 4), and Cypress plank 12 feet long, 6 wide and 1¼ inches thick, could be had delivered at my landing, supposing 500 of the first, and a proportional quantity of the latter for rails. I mention cypress on a supposition that it is a lasting wood for posts; but would be glad to know *also,* what the difference in price would be, between cypress and Pine, in the rails *only*. I am, etc.[96]

[95] Of Salisbury, Md.

[96] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To THORNTON WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1786.

Dr. Thornton: Jnn. Throckmorton delivered me your letter of the 6th. inst: I am under no apprehension that the title to the land on which you live can be affected by the decision lately had in favor of Messrs. Hite and others. Such papers as I can readily find respecting this tract, I send you. The patent from the proprietors office, granted to Captn. George Johnston of whom I bought the land particularly recites that it was granted by Jost Hite to Lewis Thomas, the deposition of John Smith taken, and admitted in the former trial, and I suppose is of record, with the copy of Lewis Thomas's bond passed for the payment thereof, together with the statement subscribed by Colo. Grayson, places the whole business in my opinion in a very clear and unequivocal point of view. But if the Commissioners (which I can scarcely conceive) should be of a different way of thinking, I should be glad to have time to illucidate matters more fully.

Colo. Grayson you will perceive certifies that what he has signed is a true copy from the proceedings; in these it is expressly admitted by the complainants, that Js. Hite did sell 425 acres; which upon a resurvey (possibly by adding a little of the barrens) measured 552 acres. Not having the original bond from Jost Hite to Lewis Thomas in my possession, I sent to the widow Darrell, formerly wife of Captn. Johnston, to see if it could be found among his papers; but she was from home and not likely, my messenger was informed, to return soon, and very probably may be found as a deposit in the proprietors, as the Deed is expressly founded upon it. In my judgment it is quite immaterial where it is, as there is, besides admission of the papers, the most uncontrovertible evidence

of the sale to Thomas. By L. Thomas's bond to Jost Hite, it appears that the money was to have been paid, "at such time, that the said Jost Hite, his Heirs, Exors, Admrs or Assigns can obtain a good patent from the office."

The only point therefore which can be disputed, according to my conception of the case, is, if the purchase money has *never* yet been paid, who is liable, the possessors of the land, or the persons to whom it was sold, or their representatives? Whether the decree of the Court goes to this point, or what powers are vested in the Commissioners respecting it I know not, never having seen the judgment, and having had but a very indistinct report of it.

The Ship with servants happening to be becalmed opposite to my door, I sent on board to enquire for a Carpenter; only one stood upon the list, and he professing not to understand much of the business, I concluded he understood nothing of it, and therefore did not buy him for you.

My best wishes attend you and your wife. I am, etc.[97]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, June 26,[98] 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Since I had the honor of writing to you in Novr. last I have been favored with your letters of the 23d. of June in the last, and 23d. of January in the present year, the first was handed to me by Doctr. Baynham,[99] and the other by James Bloxham.

Your conjectures respecting the fate of our letters, are, I am persuaded, too well founded, such frequent miscarriages would not result from negligence alone. But why, after the prying eye

[97] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[98] Sparks prints this letter under date of June 25.
[99] Dr. William Baynham, of Essex County, Va.

of curiosity, or the malignant hope of trapanning an individual, or making useful discoveries were disappointed, the letters should not have been permitted to proceed to their address, is not easy to be conceived. Being well appriz'd of the delicacy of your situation, I have studiously avoided every expression in all my letters which might if known, have involv'd you in the smallest difficulty or embarrassment; it is wantonly unfeeling therefore to destroy as well as to have inspected those which were founded in friendship only, and have the occurrences which relate to the parties for their basis. In future I will always place my letters to you under cover to Mr. Athawes.[1]

I have already informed you that Mr. Pine's reception in this Country has been favorable, and indicative of a profitable harvest in the line of his profession. Consequent of your good report of this gentleman, I furnished him with letters to many of the first characters in Philadelphia and Annapolis; and have every reason to believe that his success will be at least equal to his expectation, if it is not injured by any act of his own; against which his own prudence no doubt will guard him.

Tho' envy is no part of my composition, yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living is enough to create strong desires in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may. I am not a little obliged to you for the assurance of contributing to this, by procuring me a Buck and Doe of the best English deer; but if you have not already been at this trouble, I would my good Sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle[2] of Maryland has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his park of English deer at Belle air. Of the

[1] Samuel Athawes, of London.
[2] Benjamin Ogle.

Forest deer of this Country, I have also procured six, two bucks and four does; with these, and tolerable care, I shall soon get into a full stock for my small paddock. I do not mean to comprehend in this relinquishment, the offer of my good friend Mrs. Fairfax. I will receive with great pleasure and gratitude the seeds of any trees or shrubs wch. are not natives of this country, but reconcilable to the climate of it, that she may be so obliging as to send me; and while my attentions are bestowed on the nurture of them, it would, if anything was necessary to do it, remind me of the happy moments I have spent in conversations on this and other subjects with that Lady at Bellvoir.

My friend in New England having, since the date of my letters to you in Novr., engaged a young gentleman for me of very decent appearance and respectable family, as a tutor for the two little Custis's living with me, I have to pray that the trouble I was about to give you on this occasion may cease, and that the letter which I put under your cover for a Mr. Chapman, may be burnt.

I have now my Dr. Sir, to beg you to accept my particular thanks for the early attention which you paid to my request respecting a Farmer, and for directing James Bloxham to offer himself to me before he should engage with any other. The character given of him by Mr. Peacey[3] is full and ample, and his appearance and conversation being much in his favor, I have agreed to give him sixty guineas pr. ann: for his services, and find him and family in provisions, a house to live in, a garden to work and two Cows to furnish them with milk. In consequence thereof he has written for his wife and children to come to him. With his assistance and advice, I shall be able to dispense with a steward. I have now taken the management of my farms into my own hands, and shall find employment

[3] William Peacey.

and amusement, if not profit, in conducting the business of them myself.

The post-script to your letter of the 23d. of Jany., has given me pain; it would seem from the tenor of it as if you conceived I was not well pleased at your giving Mr. Thos. Corbin a letter of introduction to me: be assured My Dr. Sir, no idea was ever more foreign to my feelings; my intention, however incautiously the sentiment might have been expressed, was only to inform you that his brother Dick had determined to play nothing short of the whole game, and therefore was resolved to be as early with his narrative in this Country as Tom could be. And now, whilst I am upon this subject, let me once for all entreat you not to be scrupulous or backward in your introductions in future; for I can assure you with much truth, that every occasion which affords the means of hearing from you and Mrs. Fairfax will give pleasure in this family, and no person who shall come with your passport will be an unwelcome guest in it. So many come here without *proper* introductions, that it is a real satisfaction when I am able to discriminate: this will be the case whenever Mr. Ansty or any other shall present a letter to me from you. My manner of living is plain. I do not mean to be put out of it, a glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready, and such as will be content to partake of them are welcome, those who expect more will be disappointed, but no change will be affected by it.

With compliments and best wishes for Mrs. Fairfax, I am, etc.[4]

To RICHARD SPRIGG

Mount Vernon, June 28, 1786.

Dr. Sir: When your favor of the 1st. inst: accompanying the she ass, came to this place, I was from home; both however

[4] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

arrived safe, but Doctr. Bowie informed me by letter, that the bitch puppy was not brought to his house, nor have I heard anything more of the asses which were at Marlboro', nor of the grass seeds committed to the care of Mr. Digges.[5]

I feel myself much obliged by your polite offer of the first fruits of your Jenny. Tho' in appearance quite unequal to the match, yet, like a true female, she was not to be terrified at the disproportionate size of her paramour, and having renewed the conflict twice or thrice, it is to be hoped the issue will be favourable.

My best respects attend Mrs. Sprigg and the rest of your family. With great esteem and regard, I am, etc.

To DOCTOR WILLIAM BROWN

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1786.

Sir: In answer to your favor of the 27th. written at the request of the Trustees of the Alexandria Academy, I have the honor to inform you that the education of boys for the purposes mentioned in my letter of the 17th. of December, was what I had principally, if not wholly in view at that time. But if it shall appear to the Trustees that there are girls who may fitly share the benefits of the institution, I will readily comprehend them in a ratio not to exceed one girl for four boys. With esteem and regard, I am, etc.[6]

To GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX

Mount Vernon, June 30, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Better late than never, is an adage not less true, or less to be respected because it is old. The letter I am now

[5] George Digges.
[6] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

about to write to you, ought to have been written sometime ago; but however strange it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I have not had leisure (tho' more than two years have elapsed since my return to what the world calls retirement) to overhaul papers and to inspect transactions which preceeded the Revolution.

Having abundant reason to distrust my memory, I did not incline to write to you fully respecting the trust with which you had invested me, 'till I cou'd go into a thorough examination of all the papers to which it had given birth; that I might not only satisfy you in the best manner the nature of the case would admit, but myself also with respect to the transactions. How, me thinks I hear you say, could the inspection of these papers, be a work of so much time? It would not indeed Sir, if the papers had been properly arranged, and my time had been at my own disposal: but a house never clear of company, a continual reference to me of old matters (with which I ought not to have been troubled), and correspondencies without number, following several hasty removals of my papers from Book-presses to trunks and thence into the country, when the British armed vessels would make their appearance, had thrown the whole into such a jumble and confusion that I could scarce come at any of them.

I have now taken up the business from your letter of the 1st. of Jany. 1773, with which it commenced, and having gone thro' all the papers respecting it from that date to the present moment; I am exceedingly sorry to find that the greater part of it has been managed so little for your interest and so repugnant to my wishes as it appears to have been. 'Till my Country called my services to the field, in which I spent almost nine years, I acted in every respect for you as I should have done for myself. But after bidding adieu to my family

and home, to which I never expected to return if the smiles of Heaven should prove unpropitious, a general wreck of my affairs as well as yours, took place. Aware of the probability that this would happen, I perceive by the copy of a letter which I wrote to you from Cambridge the 26th. of July 1775. (so soon as I had taken the command of the army), that I informed you in strong terms, of the indispensable necessity of appointing another attorney, as I could not from my then situation, give any attention to private concerns. A little before that, from Philadelphia, in a letter of the 31st. of May, I enclosed you sundry bills as I then mentioned; and have ever since thought were to the full amount of what I owed you, 'till the late investigation of the papers hath discovered that I am yet indebted to you in the sum of £169:12.6. for goods bought at your sale the 15th. of August 1774, and £31:11:9. for those purchased at the subsequent one on the 5th. of Decr. following; which, with some other credit, make the sum which is due to you £207:13:0½.

That I should have informed you in that letter, that the remittances were to the full amount of what I then owed, is easily accounted for and was proper at that time; because the sums just mentioned did not become due (according to the conditions of the sale) 'till twelve months thereafter: but why it shou'd not have occurred to me afterwards, is more difficult to solve, and is of no great importance now to attempt; yet I can assure you with the sincerest truth, that 'till within these few days, I thought the accounts between us were so near a balance, as to render it of little importance when they were exhibited. I was led into this belief from two circumstances: first, having omitted to credit you in my Ledger by the amot. of my purchases at the sale, I wanted that remembrance of the fact which a variety of occurrences and close attention to other matters,

had entirely obliterated. 2dly., by having recurrence to the copies of my last letters to you, written after I had left home, and which were always present, I was deceived by the information there given that the remittances were compleat.

The enclosed accot. commencing with the balance of the former, does I believe, comprehend everything between us. For the balance I give you a Draft on Wakelin Welch Esqr. of London. I have drawn this at the *legal* exchange as settled by act of Assembly, tho' the currt. exchange is 40 pr. Ct., which would have reduced the bill to £148.6.5. I have allowed no interest on what I am owing you; the reasons I will frankly communicate, if they are not satisfactory, it may be drawn for hereafter. 1st. Even if there had been any person appointed by you to have receieved the money from me when it became due, I could not have reconciled it to my conscience to have paid the nominal sum in paper bills of credit; (which was the only money then in circulation) thereby giving the *shadow* for the substance of a debt. 2d. because I am in a manner rendered unable to do it by the ungenerous, not to say dishonest practices of most of my debtors who paid me with a shilling or six pence in the pound; by wch. and other means, I have sustained a loss of at least ten thousand pounds during my absence; and 3d. because my Creditors let their claims rest 'till the annihilation of paper money, and are now receiving (as indeed every person ought to do) specie, or an equivalent to the full amount. A mode so unequal has pressed hard upon me, under the deprivation of crops, and want of a market for the little that was raised.

The Bonds which were taken at the sales before mentioned, were put into the hands of Mr. Craven Peyton to collect as appears by his Rect. to Lund Washington of the 7th. of April 1776; a copy of which I will send Colo. Geo. Nicholas, that he

may see how they have been accounted for, as I will also do the rect. from the same person for Colo. Stephens's[7] Bond for £230, and Majr. McDonald's[8] for £56. dated the 14th. Jany. 1774. The other bonds remain where you informed me they were deposited, subject to the conditions and directions pointed to in your letter of the 10th. of January 1774.

With respect to your book-debts, my letters of the 10th. of June, 20th. of August and 15th. of November 1774. will have informed you of the difficulties which then occurred in every attempt that was made to collect the balances, and these increased as often as they were renewed: nothing therefore could be done without going into the Courts of justice, which, soon thereafter were shut and not opened before I left home; after which, upon the first intimation of your wish that Robt. Carter Nicholas esqr., or Colo. Fielding Lewis might be empowered to direct your affairs, I addressed both these gentlemen on the subject. The latter on account of his declining state of health, desired to be excused; and from the former I have never got an answer. Equally unsuccessfull was I in my application to his son, after I had heard of his entering upon the trust, when I informed him of the papers that were in my possession which might be necessary for his government. In April last however, I saw Colo. Nicholas in Richmond, and repeating what I had before written, he assured me that every attempt to recover debts that were not reduced to speciallities, was altogether unavailing; but that he would direct your manager (Mr. Muse) to receive the Book, papers &c. from me. As they were not necessary for any purposes he could have, and no inconvenience would attend their remaining with me (for they are in your

[7] Col. Adam Stephen.
[8] Maj. Angus McDonald.

own Escritoir) I thought it better and desired they should remain here, which Colo. Nicholas readily consented to. Here then they will remain 'till you may think proper otherwise to dispose of them. No settlement having been made of the bloomery[9] accot. by Messrs. Adam and Campbell before I left home, tho' the matter was repeatedly pressed as appears by letters, I was restrained by your instructions of the 31st. of March 1774, from executing Deeds for the land belonging to that concern; and Colo. Carlyle's[10] bond depending upon this settlemt. (as you will perceive by the letter before alluded to) remains as it did; for I have heard nothing of this business since my return.

Among other papers which I have found in my researches, is the enclosed letter from Saml. Athawes Esqr. As it is of no use here, but may serve to compare with the transactions of that date relative to your Estate in England, I send it. The pictures, for directions concerning which I asked in my letter of the 20th. of Augt. 1774, were, (not having received them before my departure) left standing at Belvoir, and unfortunately perished with the House.

For the furniture of the blue room, which had been removed to this place (out of the moths way) during my absence, I intended to allow whatever you might think it was worth, for we were, it seems, under the necessity of useing it: but as it was used under an expectation of paying for it, I am willing and ready to do it.

Among the papers in my possession, is a sealed packet, endorsed, "A copy of G: W, Fairfax's last will and testament, which he begs may not be opened until his death is confirmed, or a subsequent one is produced." It shall remain sealed as desired, and safe unless you should incline to recall it.

[9] Iron works.
[10] Col. John Carlyle.

I might my Dr. Sir, have gone more into the detail of this business. I might have given you the correspondencies between your Steward, and your Collector and myself; and between myself and others respecting your business; but from the recurrence which I have had to the copies of my letters to you, I perceive it is sufficient to refer to them. The letters of the 25th. of Septr. 15th of Octr. and 30th. of Decr. 1773, 10th. of May, 10th. of June, 20th. of Augt. and 15th. Novr. 1774; and 6th. of April and 31st. May 1775,[11] previous to my taking command of the American forces, contain a full and accurate accot. of every thing that had occurred relative to your business which had fallen under my notice. They transmitted copies of the accots. which had been rendered to me by your steward and Collector; they enclosed bills which had been purchased with your money, and they gave an accot. of all the monies which had been paid by me for your use. And my letter of the 26th. of July 1775[12] informed you of my then situation; the impracticability of my giving further attention to your business, and the indispensable necessity of your employing another attorney. From that period until my return to Virginia in the beginning of the year 1784, I remained in total ignorance of your business, and had *nearly* as little knowledge of my own. How much my [own] suffered in that space, I have already informed you; and I have reason to suspect, from what I have heard, that yours was not under the best management.

Willis, with his family, has removed to the State of Georgia; and Peyton is dead, but all those matters you have doubtlessly

[11] Drafts of the letters of June 10, 1774, and of May 31, 1775, only are now found in the *Washington Papers*. (See Washington's letters to George William Fairfax, June 10, 1774, and May 31, 1775, *ante* (vol. 3).

[12] See Washington's letter to George William Fairfax, July 26, 1775, *ante*.

On July 15, 1786, Washington placed this letter under a cover, with a brief note to Samuel Athawes, a copy of which note is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers;* but it is likely that this date is an error of the "Letter Book" copyist, and that it should be July 1.

been informed of in a more regular and authentic way by Colo. Nicholas With sentiments of great regard and friendship. I am, etc.[13]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1786.

Sir: I did not receive your Letter of the 4th of June seasonably enough to return an Answer so soon as you may have expected. I cannot inform you with any precision what the flour made of the 50 bushels of wheat sent to my mill is worth as I am informed that flour has risen to the Northward, and the short crops of wheat this season will undoubtedly have a great effect upon the price of it, I should therefore think it advisable to let it lay a little longer till it can be disposed of to more advantage. It is customary at my Mill to receive the Bran in payment for the Barrels, packing &c.

I should be much obliged to you if you would draw in my favour as soon as possible after having the means in your hand, and let me know where I shall receive the money, as the number of workmen which I have employed, and sundry other matters, call for a large and constant supply of Cash. I am etc.[14]

To WILLIAM FITZHUGH

Mount Vernon, July 2, 1786.

Dear Sir: Your letter without date was handed to me last night by your servant. With one of your mares, he returns, the other I detain: the latter was among the very few which were early favoured by the Spaniard, but is not yet satisfied. The other, which went to Magnolio, my Groom seems confident is with foal, which is the reason of my sending her.

[13] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[14] From a copy in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.
[15] Of Patuxent, Md.

A female ass which I have obtained lately, has excited desires in the Jack, to which he seemed almost a stranger; making use of her as an excitement, I have been able to get several mares served, which otherwise would have gone uncovered by him this season: this expedient, unluckily, was hit upon too late for me, as I had put almost the whole of my mares to Magnolio before it was tried; it will be practised with your mare that is left, and I hope with success.

I have advised your Servant to try the mares he carries back by some horse in your neighbourhood, and if she should discover an inclination to him, to bring her to Magnolio when he returns for the other. If this should not happen before the latter end of this month when I shall send to Mr. Reynolds for the ewe Lambs, I will contrive your mare that far, unless you forbid it in the interim.

I am much obliged to my good friend Perry for the trouble he is about to take by his enquiries for ewe lambs for me; and will give him an answer the moment he advises me of the result, which I shall be enabled to do as soon as I hear from Genl. Smallwoods manager, who sent me word that there were a number of Lambs belonging to the Genls. Estate, which he believed were to be disposed of; about which he was desired to enquire and to let me know when the Govr. came into Charles Coty. which has happened.

I am much obliged to you for the sample of Barley. Mine that I sowed this Spring is come to nothing; occasioned I believe by the continual rains.

I am very sorry to hear of your long confinement by the fall you got in this State, but glad to find you are beginning to overcome it. With every good wish for Mrs. Fitzhugh, yourself and family, I am, etc.[16]

[16] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To THOMAS JOHNSON

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1786.

Dear Sir: It was not 'till our return to the great Falls, that Colo. Gilpin and myself discovered the error of the propos'd meeting of the Directors of the Potomac Company at Alexandria on Monday preceding the first day of August. The general Meeting of the Company it seems is, by Law, to be held on the first Monday in that month; and this not happening, in the present year, 'till the 7th. day of it, we wish that the Meeting of Directors may take place on the Saturday before; of which I pray you to give Mr. Lee notice. I am, etc.[17]

To EDMUND RANDOLPH

Mount Vernon, July 12, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Your letter of the 7th. is this instant come to hand. Elizabeth and Sarah, daughters of Michl. Cresap, live I presume in Hampshire, to the Sheriff of which I will direct the summons, tho' it is at a hazard, having no other knowledge of the matter, than that their mother married one Jacobs of that county. Luther Martin lives in Maryland, and is I believe Attorney General of that State. What is to be done in this case?

I am exceedingly sorry to hear of your indisposition and loss. I hope the change of air and exercise which you are about to take will restore you to perfect health. Be assured I shall have singular pleasure in seeing you at this place as you return from, or go to Annapolis, being with great esteem and regard, Dr. Sir, etc.[17]

[17] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To JAMES TILGHMAN

Mount Vernon, July 20, 1786.

Dr. Sir: It will readily appear to you from the manner and evident marks of hurry with which the letter I had the honor to address you last, was written, that it was only meant for your own perusal; but if the contents of it can afford any satisfaction to the gentleman who you say is anxious to be informed of the truth of the insinuations which have met Capt: Asgill's countenance, I have no objection to its being handed to him under the prohibition you have mentioned; for if that gentleman conceives that such tales will excite commiseration, he may be endulged in them 'till the touch stone of time and truth will reverberate upon him. I have already informed you that my letter was written from memory. I am persuaded, nevertheless, that nothing is contained therein, wch. is not founded on facts; and that more might have been said to disprove the alligations.

I am really sorry that it is not in my power yet, to give you any satisfaction respecting the affairs of Colo. Thos. Colville's Estate;[18] and of what can be done with the claim of Miss Anderson. No man can be more anxious than I am to bring these matters to *such a close* as will satisfy all parties, and exonerate myself. It is now many months, since I have pressed the eldest son, and I believe one of the Exors of Mr. John West deceas'd, who was the principal acting Exor of T. Colvill, to

[18] On May 18, 1786, Washington receipted, at Mount Vernon, to Thomas Moody, for £95:13s. of specie money of Virginia "in part payment of a Bond given to me as Exect. of the Will of Thos. Colvil Esqr. deceased, by Mr. Benjn. Moody his late father, with Messrs. Josiah Watson and James Hendricks as Securities thereto, for three hundred and Twenty nine pounds dated the 19th of Novr. 1781." A photostat of this receipt, through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City, is in the *Washington Papers*.

furnish me, if he would not take the matter in hand himself, with all the papers of that Estate, that a final settlement upon some principle or another might be gone into. He always promised, but has never performed this, two months ago, he assured me I should have these papers in three weeks; at the end of which, I again applied and was as unsuccessful as before. His last assurance was, that he would bring them himself in a little time.

As the concerns of this Estate have been intermixed and blended with Jno. Colvill's affairs, to whom Thomas was an Exor, and as both are in great confusion and perplexity, I mean as soon as I can get the papers, to put the whole into the hands of some gentleman of abilities and knowledge of the Law, to overhaul, digest and advise what is proper to be done in every matter for the fulfilment of the trust, and towards a final settlement: the result of which, so far as it respects Miss Anderson, you shall be informed of, so soon as I can speak with any decision on this point; for at present I am perhaps as ignorant as you can be of the concerns of these Estates, and of what is proper to be done in behalf of the Legatees &c. I am, etc.[19]

To HENRY L. CHARTON

Mount Vernon, July 22, 1786.

Sir: The rude draughts herewith enclosed will, in some degree, comply with your request; because it will shew the shape of the lands about which you have been treating. The Ship by which they are sent, heaving in sight before I had notice of its coming, I could do no more than send them in the unpolished state in which they are now handed to you.

[19] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

The descriptions and situations of them you already have.

It may not be amiss to repeat, that the price set upon these lands, was on the supposition that the whole were to be taken; if part only is wanted (if I consent to separate them at all) the price by the acre, according to its situation and value, will be encreased; for to be relieved of the trouble of seating them was my principal motive and only inducement to offer them at a price which I conceived to be much under their intrinsic value. I have the honor, etc.[20]

To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1786.

Sir: I want to change my seed wheat, but do not incline to sow any but of the white kind, I shall be ready to commence my seeding in a few days and if you have any of this kind, ready, either of this, or the last year and will receive payment for it out of your collection of my Rents, I should be glad to have sent me from one to three or four hundred Bushels. I will give the Alexandria price at this time (be it what it may) or the price it may be hereafter, you at the moment, saying you are content with it. The Wheat must be clean and good and as I said before, white, and for the reason assigned I must have it sent to me immediately if at all; Pray let me know by Post what I have to trust to. I am etc.[21]

To HENRY LEE

Mount Vernon, July 26, 1786.

My Dr. Sir: Your favors of the 3d. and 11th. inst: are both at hand. The last came first, and first only two days ago. The

[20] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[21] From a copy in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

Books by Mr. Griffith are also received, and came in good order. My thanks for your kind intention of giving me the use of them 'till you return to Virginia are sincerely offered. Youngs Tour thro' Ireland, I had myself purchased when in New York; and I have just received advice of the others at Annapolis, which I had been expecting, and had given you the trouble of enquiring after.

I am much obliged to you for the information respecting the China which is for sale in New York, with the order of the Cincinnati engraved on it; if it should not be disposed of before this letter reaches you, and you think a ready and safe conveyance can be had for it to Alexandria or this place, I would thank you for buying it for me. In this case, pray let me know the exchange between New York and London at 60 days sight, and I will by return of the post, give you a good Bill for the sterlg. amount of the 150 Dollars: or, by means of some of the merchts. in Alexandria who have connexions in New York, I will forward an order on that place to that amot.

If I stopped short of your ideas respecting the navigation of the Mississippi, or of what may be the opinions of Congress on this subject, it was not for want of coincidence of sentiment, but because I was ignorant at that time of the rubs which are in the way of your commercial treaty with Spain, and because I thought some address might be necessary to temporize with, and keep the settlement of Kentucky in state of quietness. At this moment that settlement is formidable, population is rapidly encreasing there. There are many ambitious and turbulent spirits among its inhabitants, who from the present difficulties in their intercourse with the Atlantic States, have turned their eyes to New Orleans, and may become riotous and ungovernable, if the hope of traffick with it is cut off by treaty. Notwithstanding if this cession is counterpoized, it may be a

more favourable time for Congress to speak decisively to them, than when they have got stronger, but not sufficiently matured to force the passage of the Mississippi themselves; whilst the plans which are in agitation for opening communications with that territory, may, if successful, unfold to them new prospects, mutually beneficial to the old and new States.

All those matters, no doubt, will be duly considered by Congress, and a decision had on which ever side the advantages preponderate.

It was with very sincere regret I received the news of Genl. Greene's death.[22] Life and the concerns of this world one would think are so uncertain, and so full of disappointments, that nothing is to be counted upon from human actions. Adieu, with sentiments of great regard and affection, I am etc.[23]

To WILLIAM GRAYSON

Mount Vernon, July 26, 1786.

Dear Sir: It is a fact that your favor of the 27th. of May was long getting to me; but why it happened so, I am unable to inform you; as I generally send to the Post Office in Alexandria twice in every week.

Is it not among the most unaccountable things in nature that the representation of a great Country shou'd, generally, be so thin as not to be able to execute the functions of Government?[24] To what is this to be ascribed? Is it the result of political manoeuvre in some States, or is it owing to supineness, or want of means?

Be the causes what they may, it is shameful and disgusting. In a word it hurts us, our character as a nation is dwindling;

[22] Nathanael Greene died June 19, 1786, at the age of 44.
[23] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[24] Representation in Congress.

and what it must come to if a change should not soon take place, our enemies have foretold; for in truth we seem either not capable, or not willing to take care of ourselves.

For want, I suppose, of competent knowledge of the Connecticut claim to Western territory, the compromise which is made with her, appears to me to be a disadvantageous one for the union; and if her right is not, one of the motives (according to your account) for yielding to it, in my humble opinion, is exceedingly dangerous and bad; for upon such principles, *might,* not *right,* must ever prevail, and there will be no surety for anything.[25]

I wish very sincerely that the Land Ordinance may answer the expectations of Congress. I had, and still have my doubts of the utility of the plan, but pray devoutly, that they may never be realized, as I am desireous of seeing it a productive branch of the Revenue. That part which makes the waters and carrying places common highways, and free for all the States, is certainly valuable.

I thank you for the other articles of information; such as you have disclosed confidentially, you may rest assured will proceed no further, 'till it becomes public thro' other channels; and this shall always be the case with paragraphs which are so marked. The answer to the Memorial of Mr. Adams by Lord Carmarthen, I have seen at large. It was impolitic and unfortunate, if it was not unjust in these States to pass laws,

[25] Grayson had written (May 27) that Connecticut offered to cede all her claim to the Western Territory, reserving however 120 miles between the ceded lands and the Pennsylvania line; "this cession was at first much opposed, but Congress have at length agreed to accept it whenever the delegates of that State shall be authorized to make a proper deed." The consequence of this, Grayson thought, would be a loss to the United States of 6,000,000 acres, which had already been ceded by Virginia and New York. "The advocates for this measure, urged . . . that the claim of a powerful State although unsupported by right, was under present circumstances a disagreable [desirable?] thing; and that sacrifices ought to be made for the public tranquillity." Grayson's letter is in the *Washington Papers.*

which by fair construction might be considered as infractions of the treaty of peace.

It is good policy at all times, to place one's adversary in the wrong. Had we observed good faith, and the western Posts had then been withheld from us by G: Britain, we might have appealed to god and man for justice, and if there are any guarantees to the treaty, we might have called upon them to see it fulfilled.[26] But now we cannot do this; tho' clear I am, that the reasons assigned by the British Ministry are only ostensible, and that the Posts, under one pretence or another, were intended to have been detained, tho' no such Acts had ever passed: but how different would our situation have been under such circumstances? With very sincere regard and affection, I am, etc.[27]

To MAUDUIT DU PLESSIS

Mount Vernon, July 28, 1786.

Sir: It is with great pleasure I take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of the letter you did me the honor to write to me from New York on the 20th. inst:, accompanied by an original letter from Mr. le Marquis de la Fayette, and by the copy of one from Mr. le Comte d'Estaing.

Such ample testimonials of merit from such distinguished characters, cannot fail to ensure you the most grateful reception throughout America in general; but permit me Sir, to add for myself in particular, that I shall be unfeignedly happy

[26] By the VIIth article of the Treaty of Peace, the western posts held by the British within United States territory were to be evacuated. By the IVth article, every facility was to be allowed to British subjects to collect the debts due to them in the several States. Lord Carmarthen charged that obstacles had been thrown in the way of collecting such debts, through recent laws enacted by some of the States, and that the IVth article had been violated by the United States. He stated that in retaliation these posts would not be given up.

[27] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

in receiving you under the peaceful shades of Mount Vernon, and in seeking occasions to render you any services which it may be in my power to offer.

In the meantime (as I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you personally) I will content myself with felicitating you on your safe arrival in the United States, while I congratulate my Country on the acquisition of so valuable and dignified a Citizen.

With sentiments of perfect esteem and consideration I have the honor, etc.[28]

To THOMAS SMITH

Mount Vernon, July 28, 1786.

Sir: It would be more tiresome than interesting to assign reasons for my not having acknowledged the receipt of your letters of the 26th. of Novr. and 7th. of Feby., 'ere this. It may be sufficient to inform you, that they came duly to hand, tho' I had not the pleasure of seeing Majr. McCormick[29] whilst he was in Virginia, which I regretted, as I might have derived useful information from him respecting the views and expectations of the occupants of my Land in Washington county; at the same time I might possibly have engaged him, or some other thro' him, who would have made it a point to bring forward such testimony as would evince, that pre-occupany of the tract in dispute, was in me.

Without this I *may* fail in this particular, as it is not frequently found that people volunteer their services upon these occasions; but, on the contrary, that they generally hang back, from a desire of living (the idea is) in peace with their neighbours. For this reason I must refer you to the information

[28] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[29] Maj. George McCormick.

given in my former letters; with a request that the evidences there named may be summon'd (if you think it necessary) to prove what has been advanced.

The instances of decision, of wch. you have made minutes in your letter of the 20th. of Novr., in the western Courts, are indicative of a favourable determination of my Suit, and I would not depart from the legal ground on which I claim; yet as an auxiliary, the proof of pre-occupancy would drive my opponents from what they conceive to be their strong hold; for it is on this, (before what they call *legal* steps were taken by me) that they, I am persuaded, rest their cause: but why *all of them* should take this ground, when *most of them* emigrated to the Country after the date of my patent, is misterious, and may comprehend more than I am aware of; for which, among other reasons, if I cou'd be ascertained of the precise time for the trial, I would endeavour to attend; especially as I have other calls in that Country, among which, to dispose of that Land if the decision is favorable for me, and of my other tract where Simpson formerly lived, are most important.

I have considered your remarks, and wish it was in my power to solve your Doubts; my answers shall be candid, tho' the explanations may be unfavorable.

However strange it may seem, the fact nevertheless is, that Posey's[30] Warrant was not dated 'till the 25th. day of Novembr. 1773, (posterior, according to my opponents accot., to their settlemt.), this knowledge I have but lately obtained, and am exceedingly surprized at the fact, as the right was bought by me for this express purpose two or three years before, as you may perceive by the date of the Bond which is now in your

[30] John Posey.

possession: this circumstance it is necessary to apprize you of, that if known to the Defendants you may be guarded against the force of it, as that the date of Colo. Crawfords deputation is subsequent to their pretended settlement. The proof to the hand writing of Posey, I have already furnished you with.

I believe there has been no entry in the Surveyors Book of this tract; for I can find nothing there preceeding the record of the Survey; to what to ascribe this I know not, except to a neglect of office, or to the unacquaintedness of Colo. Crawford with business: the presumption however is, that the preceeding steps to the issuing of the Patent, were legal and such as satisfied this government, under whose jurisdiction it was: and this Government having stipulated in its cession to Pennsylvania that the grants she had made, should be secured to the Grantees. I cannot conceive upon what ground the validity of mine can be questioned without arraigning the conduct of a sister State in the management of her own business.

The Council books, as I have before informed you, were either destroyed by the enemy, or so mislaid as that no access can be had to them; it is not in my power therefore to furnish you with an authenticated copy of the Proclamation which takes off the restriction in that of 1763.

If you should hear of any persons wanting to buy improved Lands in the Counties of Fayette or Washington, I would thank you for letting them know that mine (as already mentioned) are for sale. I wish you for no more than the real value of them, and if you could help me to fix this by comparison with the prices of Lands of equal quality, similarity of improvements and with the same advantages, in these Counties, it would oblige me. I would make the payments (being well secured) easy to the purchaser.

I should be glad to hear that this letter had got safe to your hands; an acknowledgement of it via Philada. or Baltimore, with direction to put it into the Post Office, will be most certain of a conveyance. I am, etc.[31]

To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, July 30, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Majr. Gibbes handed me your letter of the 24th. ulto. with the accounts enclosed. Necessity alone ought to compel me to loose the difference between £50: 18.9. and 339 53/90 Dollars; because the last mentioned sum (but a very little while since) was, if I recollect rightly considered as the *specie* value of the Commissary's Certificates for which it was issued by Mr. Stelle,[32] and was accordingly so settled by the scale of depreciation. Notwithstanding, as I am entirely unacquainted with the fund upon which this certificate has issued, and what it may ultimately tend to, I must repeat my wish that you would act for me in this case, as you wou'd do for yourself. Laying out of the money will be no inducement to my selling the Certificate at an under value, if it is thought that it will finally be good, and the interest can be received in the mean while. But as I never made paper money a study, having had nothing to do with any, except old continental, (by which I have lost very considerably) I must rely upon your judgment more than any direction I could give for the disposition of Stelle certificates always remembering that I am to give others credit for one moiety of what it would really fetch in specie, and that their Accots. are to be credited by what you shall say to me on this head, it would sell for.

[31] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[32] Benjamin Stelle. He was Pennsylvania commissioner for settling accounts.

When Blankets, Osnabrigs, Linens of any kind, Paints, loaf Sugar, Coffee, best Hyson Tea, or either of them may happen to be low at the wholesale or Vendue stores in Philada., you would do me a kindness by giving the information; because if I should not happen to be supplied at the time, I would immediately commission you to make a purchase for me.

Do the Tanners in Philadelphia make Leather which is strong, stout and well adapted for negroes shoes? If so, what could twenty five sides of each (unblacked) or as much as would make 150 pair, with three soles, be bought for?

Be so good as to forward the enclos'd by a safe conveyance: the one to Mr. Smith respects a Law suit I have in the Western Country, the miscarriage, or delay of which might be injurious to me. My compliments to Mrs. Biddle, with esteem, I am, etc.[33]

*To COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1786.

My dear Count: I have been duly honored with the two letters you were pleased to address to me in the months of Jany and March last: I need scarcely tell you that your communications always afford me the sincerest gratification; because they are always replete with the most friendly sentiments; because they insensibly bring to remembrance some circumstances of that pleasing and important period we so happily passed together, and because you frequently have it in your power to give such informations, as in my present retirement from the busy and political world cannot fail of being acceptable to me.

It must give pleasure to the friends of humanity even in this distant section of the globe to find that the clouds, which

[33] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

threatned to burst in a storm of War on Europe, have dissipated and left a still brighter political horizon. It is also to be hoped, that something will turn up to prevent, even at the death of the Elector of Bavaria or the King of Prussia, the effusion of human blood, for the acquisition of a little territory.

As the rage of conquest, which in the times of barbarity, stimulated Nations to blood, has in a great degree ceased; as the objects which formerly gave birth to Wars are daily diminishing; and as mankind are becoming more enlightened and humanized, I cannot but flatter myself with the pleasing prospect that more liberal policies and more pacific systems will take place amongst them. To indulge this idea affords a soothing consolation to a philanthropic mind, insomuch that altho' it should be founded in illusion, one would hardly wish to be divested of an error, so grateful in itself and so innocent in its consequences.

The Treaty of Amity which has lately taken place between the King of Prussia and the United States, marks a new æra in negotiation. It is perfectly original in many of its articles. It is the most liberal Treaty which has ever been entered into between independent Powers; and should its principles be considered hereafter as the basis of connection between nations, it will operate more fully to produce a general pacification than any measure hitherto attempted amongst mankind. Superadded to this, we may safely assert, that there is at present less war in the world than ever has been at any former period.

The British continue to hold the Posts ceded by the late Treaty of Peace to the Ud. States. Each of these powers does not hesitate to criminate the other, by alledging some infractions of that Treaty. How the matter will terminate time must disclose. Everything remains tranquil on this side of the Atlantic, except that the Savages sometimes commit a few

trifling ravages on the frontiers. General Green lately died at Savanna in Georgia. The Public, as well as his family and friends, has met with a severe loss. He was a great and good man indeed. With sentiments of the purest esteem etc.[34]

To DUC DE LAUZUN

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1786.

Monr. le Duc: I have had the honor to receive your letter to me of the 25th. of Augt. 1785. by the hand of Mr. Michau,[35] of whom it was introductory. The scientific object which occasioned the voyage of that gentleman to America, his personal character, and the recommendation of the Duke de Lauzun, conspired to make me extremely happy in forming an acquaintance with him. I should be made still more so by his complete success in his botanical pursuits. Any assistance in my power will be most chearfully accorded as a tribute to his merit, and as a demonstration of the attachment and esteem with which I have the honor, etc.[36]

To BARON DE HOLKENDORFF

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1786.

Sir: The letter of the 4th. of June 1785 which you was pleased to address to me by Colo. Senff,[37] has very lately been put into my hand; in answer to which I have the honor to observe, that having divested myself of an official character and retired to private life, I can have no agency whatever in matters of a public nature. This, I thought, had been made known

[34] From the original in the *Rochambeau Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[35] André Michaux, French botanist.
[36] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[37] Christian Senff, formerly a colonel in the South Carolina State troops.

extensively enough by the manner of my resignation and retirement. The want of being acquainted with these facts seems however, to have involved some gentlemen at a distance in unnecessary and unavailing applications. All therefore, that I have it in my power to advise you on the two objects of your letter, is, that application for admittance into the Society of the Cincinnati, must be either to the Society of the State in whose line the officer served; or, if the officer was a foreigner, to the Society in France; and that with respect to pecuniary claims, recourse must be had either to the Paymaster General, or Secretary for the Department of War. With due consideration and regard I have the honor, etc.[38]

To ANTOINE FELIX WUIBERT DE MÉZIÈRES

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1786.

Sir: I have been favored with the receipt of triplicate copies of your polite letter dated at Cape-francois the 15th. of Novr. last.

While you do me the justice to acknowledge the zeal with which I desired and attempted to promote the interest of all the individuals composing the army I had formerly the honor to command; permit me to express my regret that, from peculiar circumstances, I had it not more fully in my power to attain that desirable object.

It was doubtless the intention of Congress to establish funds for the punctual payment of the interest as it became due on the public securities given to the officers and Soldiers of the Army for arrearages of pay and commutation: Their designs however have hitherto been unfortunately frustrated by the delinquency of some of the States, which could not be induced

[38] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

to comply with their requisition of 5 pr Cent impost. All the States in the Union have at length granted that impost, but there are still some difficulties respecting the collection &c. Whenever these can be removed, it is to be hoped the interest will be regularly paid on your Certificates. In the meantime Congress are taking measures for surveying the Lands ceded to them; out of wch. the officers and Soldiers will undoubtedly receive what has been promised.

Having, as you know sir, long since retired from all public employment, I have it not in my option to interfere with public measures by making recommendations. Indeed I do not think it probable that any Corps of Engineers will be established at present. But I am very happy in all events to find that you are so agreeably situated with an old acquaintance and friend.

As to medals and Diplomas for the Cincinnati, the former I believe are to be purchased in Philada., and the latter to be obtained thro' the State Society of wch. an officer is member. I have none of either at my disposal. With sincere wishes for your health and happiness, I remain, etc.[39]

To WAKELIN WELCH

Mount Vernon, July, 1786.

Sir: Since my last of the 28th. of Novr. I have been favored with your letters of the 27th. of Feby. and 13th. of March; and have received the paper hangings and watch by Capt. Andrews. With the last Mrs. Washington is well pleased, and I thank you in her name for your attention to the making of it.

If the stocks keep up, and there is not a moral certainty of their rising higher in a short time, it is my wish and desire,

[39] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

that my interest in the Bank may be immediately sold, and the money arising therefrom made subject to my Drafts in your hands, some of which, at sixty days' sight, may soon follow this letter.

The footing on which you have placed the interest of my debt to you, is all I require. To stand on equal ground with others who owe money to the Merchants in England, and who were not so prompt in their payment of the principal as I have been, is all I aim at. Whatever the two Countries may finally decide with respect to interest; or whatever general agreement or compromise may be come to between British Creditors and American Debtors, I am willing to abide by; nor should I again have touched upon this subject in this letter, had you not introduced a case which, in my opinion, has no similitude with the point in question. You say I have received interest at the Bank for the money which was there, granted: but (besides remarking that only part of this money was mine) permit me to ask if G. Britain was not enabled, by means of the bank, to continue the war with this Country? Whether this war did not deprive us of the means of paying our Debts? And whether the interest I received from this source did, or could bear any proportion to the losses sustained by having my grain, my Tobacco, and every article of produce rendered unsalable and left to perish on my hands? However, I again repeat, that I ask no discrimination of you in my favor, for had there been no stipulation by treaty to secure debts, nay more, had there even been an exemption by the Legislative authority, or practice of this Country against it, I would, from a conviction of the propriety and justice of the measure, have discharged my *original* debt to you.

But from the moment our ports were shut, and our markets were stopped by the hostile fleets and armies of Great Britain,

'till the first were opened, and the others revived, I should, for the reasons I have (though very cursorily) assigned, have thought the interest during that epocha stood upon a very different footing. I am much obliged by the trouble you have taken to enquire into the nature of the connexion between the House of Messrs. Hanbury & Co. and Balfour & Barraud. I had no sanguine hopes of redress from that quarter, but as it seemed to be the *only* chance, I was willing to try it. I am etc.[40]

*To BATTAILE MUSE

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786.

Sir: Not till within these two days did your letter of the 11th. of last Month get to my hands. I have sent your advertisement to the Printer and as soon as the number of copies are struck they shall be forwarded to you. My former letter containing my sentiments respecting the flour at my Mill, I have done nothing in it since rather wishing that you would pursue your own judgment with respect to the Sale than to derive any price from me. Neither Wheat or flour has started in price that I have heard of as yet.

Your order for Fifty pounds on Colo. Geo. Gilpin which I hereby acknowledge the receipt of will be presented in a day or two.

The Hites can have no claim, I conceive, to the small tract of 183 acres on which Bailey lives, that was a piece of Land which lay waste, after all the surrounding Lands were taken up and Patented and granted without the interference of any one. Nor do I think the determination in favor of the Hites can possibly affect the other Land on Bullskin, because it is in proof that this Land was sold by old Joist Hite to one Lewis

[40] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Thomas who sold it to Captn. George Johnson and is so recited in the Deed from the Proprietors Office. In the former trial these matters were adduced as evidence; which evidence I suppose is of record; I have in answer to a letter on this head, written to Thornton Washington who lives on part of the Land and who I hope (for I have no idea of attending the Commissioners) will take care of his as well as my interest in this business; if you can assist him in it I shall be obliged to you. I have not had time yet to examine Colo. Fairfax's Land Papers, nor would I incline to entrust them to any casual conveyance where there can be the remotest danger of delay or miscarriage. If you call here, as intimated, I will deliver them to you without the formallity of an order from Colo. Nicholas, your receipt for them will satisfy me.

I am very well satisfied with your settlement with McCrane, and I am pleased to hear you had so much better luck with your Clover Seed than I had with that you sent me which was sowed as Soon as I got it last fall and in a piece of the best ground I had on purpose to raise Seed, not one of wch. was up the middle of May when I put the same ground in Timothy; the disappointment I would not have sustained for fifty pounds, because fifty pounds will not buy me as much Seed as I expected to raise from the four acres on which I sowed the bushel of defective Seed which has occasioned me the loss of a Season. I am etc.[41]

To CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786.

Dear Sir: The letter you did me the honor to write to me on the 3d. of Feby., has come safely to hand. Nothing could be

[41] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

more satisfactory to me than the friendly sentiments contained in it, and the generous manner in which you always interest yourself in the happiness and dignity of the United States. I wish I had it in my power to inform you that the several States had fully complied with all the wise requisitions which Congress has made to them on national subjects. But unfortunately for us, this is not yet the case. Altho' for my own part I do not cease to expect that this just policy will ultimately take effect. It is not the part of a good Citizen to despair of the republic: nor ought we to have calculated, that our young Governments would have acquired, in so short a period, all the consistency and solidity, which it has been the work of ages to give to other nations. All the States however, have at length granted the impost; tho' unhappily some of them have granted it under such qualifications, as have hitherto prevented its operation. The greater part of the Union seems to be convinced of the necessity of fœderal measures, and of investing Congress with the power of regulating the commerce of the whole. The reasons you offer on this subject are certainly forcible, and I cannot but hope will 'ere long have their due efficacy.

In other respects our internal Governments are daily acquiring strength. The laws have their fullest energy; justice is well administered; robbery, violence or murder is not heard of from Nw. Hampshire to Georgia. The people at large (as far as I can learn) are more industrious than they were before the war. Œconomy begins, partly from necessity and partly from choice and habit, to prevail. The seeds of population are scattered over an immense tract of western country. In the old States, wch. were the theatres of hostility, it is wonderful to see how soon the ravages of war are repaired. Houses are rebuilt, fields enclosed, stocks of cattle which were destroyed are replaced, and many a desolated territory assumes again the cheerful

appearance of cultivation. In many places the vestiges of conflagration and ruin are hardly to be traced. The arts of peace, such as clearing rivers, building bridges, and establishing conveniences for travelling &c. are assiduously promoted. In short, the foundation of a great Empire is laid, and I please myself with a persuasion, that Providence will not leave its work imperfect.

I am sensible that the picture of our situation, which has been exhibited in Europe since the Peace, has been of a very different complexion; but it must be remembered that all the unfavorable features have been much heightened by the medium of the English newspapers thro' which they have been represented. The British still continue to hold the Posts on our frontiers, and affect to charge us with some infractions of the Treaty. On the other hand we retort the accusation. What will be the consequences, is more than I can pretend to predict. To me, however, it appears, that they are playing the same foolish game in commerce that they have lately done in War; that their ill-judged impositions will eventually drive our ships from their ports, wean our attachments to their manufactures, and give to France decided advantages for a commercial connexion with us. To strengthen the alliance and promote the interests of France and America will ever be the favorite object of him, who has the honor to subscribe himself, with every sentiment of attachment, &c.[42]

To THE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786.

Dr. Sir: I have to thank you very sincerely for your interesting letter of the 27th. of June, as well as for the other

[42] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

communications you had the goodness to make at the same time. I am sorry to be assured, of what indeed I had little doubt before, that we have been guilty of violating the treaty in some instances. What a misfortune it is the British should have so well grounded a pretext for their palpable infractions: and what a disgraceful part, out of the choice of difficulties before us, are we to act.

Your sentiments, that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own. What the event will be, is also beyond the reach of my foresight. We have errors to correct; we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us, that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of a coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation without having lodged some where a power, which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner, as the authority of the State Governments extends over the several States.

To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the public, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointment, must they not mingle frequently with the mass of Citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it: perfection falls

not to the share of mortals. Many are of opinion that Congress have too frequently made use of the suppliant humble tone of requisition, in applications to the States, when they had a right to assert their imperial dignity and command obedience. Be that as it may, requisitions are a perfect nihility where thirteen sovereign independent disunited States are in the habit of discussing and refusing compliance with them at their option. Requisitions are actually little better than a jest and a bye word throughout the land. If you tell the Legislatures they have violated the Treaty of Peace, and invaded the prerogatives of the confederacy, they will laugh in your face. What then is to be done? Things cannot go on in the same train forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with the circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme into another. To anticipate and prevent disastrous contingencies, would be the part of wisdom and patriotism.

What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing. I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of Government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! what a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! what a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

Retired as I am from the world I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the Ship into Port, and having been

fairly discharged; it is not my business to embark again on a sea of troubles. Nor could it be expected, that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight on the minds of my Countrymen; they have been neglected, tho' given as a last legacy in the most solumn manner. I had then perhaps some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments, etc.[43]

*To THOMAS JEFFERSON

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786.

Dear Sir: The letters you did me the favor to write to me on the 4th. and 7th. of Jany. have been duly received. In answer to your obliging enquiries respecting the dress, attitude &ca. which I would wish to have given to the Statue in question, I have only to observe that not having sufficient knowledge in the art of sculpture to oppose my judgment to the taste of Connoisseiurs, I do not desire to dictate in the matter; on the contrary I shall be perfectly satisfied with whatever may be judged decent and proper. I should even scarcely have ventured to suggest that perhaps a servile adherence to the garb of antiquity might not be altogether so expedient as some little deviation in favor of the modern costume, if I had not learnt from Colo. Humphreys that this was a circumstance hinted in conversation by Mr. West[44] to Houdon. This taste, which has been introduced in painting by West, I understand is received with applause and prevails extensively.

I have taken some pains to enquire into the facts respecting the medals of the Cincinnati, which Majr. L'Enfant purchased

[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On August 1 Washington signed agreements with Thomas Mahony, as a carpenter, for one year and Cornelius McDermott Roe, as a stonemason and bricklayer, for one year. These agreements are in the *Washington Papers*.

[44] Benjamin West.

in France. It seems that when he went to Europe in 1783 he had money put into his hands to purchase a certain number, and that conceiving it to be consonant with the intentions of the Society, he purchased to a still greater amount; insomuch that a Committee of the Genl. Meeting, upon examining his Acct. reported a balle. due to him of Six hundred and thirty dollars, wch. report was accepted. This money is still due, and is all that is due from the Society of the Cincinnati as a Society. General Knox has offered to pay the amount to Majr. L'Enfant, but as it has become a matter of some public discussion, the latter wished it might remain until the next Genl Meeting, which will be in May next. In the mean time Genl. Knox (who is Secretary Genl) has, or will write fully on the Subject to the Marquis de la Fayette, from whom he has had a letter respecting the business.

We have no News of importance. And if we had, I should hardly be in the way of learning it; as I divide my time between the superintendence of opening the navigations of our rivers and attention to my private concerns. Indeed I am too much secluded from the world to know with certainty, what sensation the refusal of the British to deliver up the Western posts, has made on the public mind. I fear the edge of its sensibility is somewhat blunted. Fœderal measures are not yet universally adopted. New York, wch. was as well disposed a State as any in the Union is said to have become in a degree antifœderal. Some other States are, in my opinion, falling into very foolish and wicked plans of emitting paper money. I cannot however give up my hopes and expectations that we shall 'ere long adopt a more just and liberal system of policy. What circumstances will lead, or what misfortunes will compel us to it, is more than can be told without the spirit of prophecy. In the meantime the people are industrious, œconomy

begins to prevail, and our internal governments are, in general, tolerably well administered.

You will probably have heard of the death of Genl Greene before this reaches you, in which case you will, in common with your Countrymen, have regretted the loss of so great and so honest a man. Genl. McDougall, who was a brave Soldier and a disinterested patriot, is also dead;[45] he belonged to the Legislature of his State, the last act of his life, was (after being carried on purpose to the Senate) to give his voice against the emission of a paper currency. Colo. Tilghman, who was formerly of my family, died lately and left as fair a reputation as ever belonged to a human character. Thus some of the pillars of the revolution fall. Others are mouldering by insensible degrees. May our Country never want props to support the glorious fabrick! With sentiments of the highest esteem etc.[46]

To JOHN MARSDEN PINTARD

Mount Vernon, August 2, 1786.

Sir: Since my last to you, the Industry Captn. Gibson is arrived, but from the length of the voyage most of the articles you had the goodness to send me have perished. The Figs were entirely lost, so were all the Malmsey grape. Of the Muscat and Vera., some showing signs of feeble life; I have with great care and attention recovered two of the cuttings. These have now put forth leaf, and I hope will do well.

The wines with which I was furnished by Messrs. Searle & Co. are of a very good quality, and came to hand in very good order, and supplied, I dare say, upon as good terms as they could have been had from any other House on the Island;

[45] Alexander McDougall died June 8, 1786.

[46] From the original in the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

these considerations, added to such as you have mentioned, will I am persuaded, induce me to give it the preference, especially, as from the purport of your letter, you must be connected therewith.

The negotiations which have been set on foot by Congress with the piratical States[47] will, it is to be hoped, put an end to the apprehensions with which the American trade is labouring, from the conduct of those barbarians towards it. I am, etc.[48]

To LAMAR, HILL, BISSETT & COMPANY

Mount Vernon, August 3, 1786.

Gentn: Your favors of the 6th. and 17th. of December came duly to hand; and I have also received from Norfolk the pipe of Madeira wine which you addressed to the care of Doctr. Taylor of that place for my use. I have not yet tasted it, but presume it is fine: it ought to be so, for the cost of it in the Island, besides the extra charges here, is £7.12.4 pr. pipe more than the wines I had from Messrs. Searle & Co. in April 1783; than which none, I think, could be better, for it was old, and of an excellent quality.

I remit to Henry Hill Esqr. of Philada. a draft[49] for £43:12:4 on Wakelin Welch Esqr. of London, which is the amot. of your order on me in favor of the above gentleman. I am, etc.[48]

To WAKELIN WELCH

Mount Vernon, August 5, 1786.

Sir: Arthur Young Esqr. of Bury, in Suffolk, having been so obliging as to offer to procure for me Implements of Husbandry,

[47] The Barbary States.

[48] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[49] On August 3 Washington also wrote Henry Hill, inclosing the above-mentioned draft. This note is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

seeds &c., I have accepted his kindness with much pleasure, because he is a competent judge of the first, and will be careful that the latter are good of their several kinds, a thing of much consequence, and which does not often happen with seeds imported into this Country from Europe.

I have requested him to forward these articles to your care, and to draw upon you for the amount. Let me entreat your particular attention to them, with a request that the Captn. of the Vessel on board which they are shipped may be sollicited to keep the seeds in the cabbin, or out of the Ship's hold at any rate, as they never fail to heat and spoil when put there. I am, etc.[50]

To WAKELIN WELCH

Mount Vernon, August 5, 1786.

Sir: On the other side is a copy of my letter to you of this date under cover to Arthur Young Esqr. of Bradford Hall, near Bury in Suffolk. The articles which I have written to him for are,

2 ploughs, with spare shares and Coulters; and a mould to form others on.

A little of the best kind of cabbage seed for field culture.

20 lb. of best Turnip seeds.

10 bushels of Sainfoin seeds.

8 Do of the Winter Vetches.

2 Do of Rye-grass Seeds.

50 lb. of Hop clover seed; and a little Burnet seed, if it is in estimation with Farmers.

Perhaps he may add a few seeds of other kinds, perhaps he may encrease the quantities above, and possibly add some other instruments of Husbandry, tho' I have written for none, nor

[50] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

have I reason to expect any unless he may be disposed to send very useful ones without waiting a request. It is also possible, tho' I have very little expectation of its happening, that he may engage me a common plough-man.

Your paying the cost of these things and forwarding them in a vessle for Potomac, will much oblige me; as it will to convey the letters herewith enclosed, to their respective addresses. I am, etc.[51]

To WILLIAM PEACEY

Mount Vernon, Virginia, August 5, 1786.

Sir: Excuse the liberty I take in putting the inclosed Letters under cover to you. It is to oblige Mr. James Bloxham who now lives with me, but who scarcely has sufficient knowledge of his own mind to determine whether to continue more than the present year (for which he is engaged) or not. In a word he seems rather to have expected to have found well organized farms, than that the end and design of my employing him was to make them so. He makes no allowances for the ravages of a nine year's war from which we are but just beginning to emerge, nor does he consider that if our system of Husbandry had been as perfect as it may be found on your Farms, or in some of the best farming Counties in England, that there would have been no occasion for his Services.

What the old man has written to you respecting the coming over of his wife, sending over plows, seeds and so forth, I know not; because at different times he seems to be of different opinions. I can only add therefore, if his family are to come, and by the way of London, that it would be well for some person in their behalf to open a correspondence with Messrs. Forrest and Stoddart Merchans, of that place, who

[51] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

have Ships that pass by my door in their way to Alexandria, and would render the passage in one of them much more convenient, and less expensive than to any other place; tho in a Vessel bound to Norfolk in this State, (Virginia,) or to Annapolis, Baltimore, or Patuxent in the neighbouring one of Maryland, it would not be very inconvenient. In case of her coming, whatever Implements, Seeds, &c. may be requested by Mr. Bloxham on my Acct. had better be paid for by his Wife, and settled for here.

I am sorry to be thus troublesome, but as Mr. Bloxham considers you as his Benefactor, and Friend, has addressed one of his Letters to you, and his Wife, if she finally resolves to come, will stand in need of advice and assistance, it is necessary that the best mode should be suggested. A ship from Bristol to either of the places above named, may, probably, be more convenient than the rout by London, but of this you can judge better than I. I am etc.[52]

*To ARTHUR YOUNG

Mount Vernon, August 6, 1786.

Sir: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 7th. of Jany. from Bradford-Hall, in Suffolk, and thank you for the favor of opening a correspondence, the advantages of which will be so much in my favor.

Agriculture has ever been amongst the most favourite amusements of my life, though I never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years total inattention to it, has added nothing to a knowledge which is best understood from practice; but with the means you have been so obliging as to

[52] From the text kindly furnished by Forest G. Sweet, of Battle Creek, Mich. It varies from the "Letter Book" copy in minor verbal details only.

furnish me, I shall return to it (though rather late in the day) with hope and confidence.

The System of Agriculture (if the epithet of system can be applied to it), which is in use in this part of the United States, is as unproductive to the practitioners as it is ruinous to the land-holders. Yet it is pertinaciously adhered to. To forsake it; to pursue a course of husbandry which is altogether different and new to the gazing multitude, ever averse to novelty in matters of this sort, and much attached to their old customs, requires resolution; and without a good practical guide, may be dangerous; because, of the many volumes which have been written on this subject, few of them are founded on experimental knowledge, are verbose, contradictory, and bewildering. Your Annals shall be this guide. The plan on which they are published, gives them a reputation which inspires confidence; and for the favor of sending them to me, I pray you to accept my very best acknowledgments. To continue them, will add much to the obligation.

To evince with what avidity, and with how little reserve I embrace the polite and friendly offer you have made me of supplying me with "Men, Cattle, Tools, Seeds, or anything else that may add to my rural amusement", I will give you, Sir, the trouble of providing, and sending to the care of Wakelin Welch, Esqr. of London, Mercht. the following articles.

Two of the simplest, and best constructed Plows for land which is neither very heavy nor Sandy. To be drawn by two horses. To have spare shares and Colters; and a mold on which to form new irons when the old ones are worn out, or will require repairing.

I shall take the liberty in this place to observe, that some years ago, from a description, or recommendation of what was then called the Rotheram; or Patent Plow, I sent to England

for one of them, and till it began to wear, and was ruined by a bungling Country Smith that no plow could have done better work, or appeared to have gone easier with two horses; but for want of a mold (wch. I had neglected to order with the Plow), it became useless after the irons which came in with it were much worn.

A little of the best kind of Cabbage-seeds, for field culture.

20 lbs. of the best Turnip-Seeds, for Do.

10 Bushels of Sainfoin Seeds

8 Bushls. of the Winter Vetches.

2 Bushls. of Rye-grass Seeds.

50 lbs. of Hop clover seeds, and If it is decided (for much has been said for and against it), that Burnet, as an early food, is valuable, I should be glad of a bushel of this seed also.

Red clover seeds are to be had on easy terms in this Country, but if there are any other kinds of grass-Seeds (not included in the above) that you may think valuable, especially for early feeding or cutting, you would oblige me by adding a small quantity of the seeds, to put me in stock: Early grasses, unless a species can be found that will stand a hot Sun, and oftentimes severe droughts in the summer months, without much expence of cultivation, would suit our climate best.

You see, Sir, that without ceremony, I avail myself of your kind offer; but if you should find in the course of our correspondence, that I am likely to become troublesome you can easily check me. Inclosed I give you an order on Wakelin Welch Esqr. for the cost of such things as you may have the goodness to send me. I do not at this time ask for any other implements of Husbandry than the Plows; but when I have read your annals (for they are but just come to hand) I may request more. In the meanwhile, permit me to ask what a

good Plowman might be had for, annual wages, to be found (being a single man) in board, washing, and lodging? The writers upon Husbandry estimate the hire of labourers so differently in England, that it is not easy to discover from them whether one of the class I am speaking of would cost Eight, or Eighteen pounds a year. A good Plowman at low wages, would come very opportunely with the Plows here requested.

By means of the application I made to my friend Mr. Fairfax, of Bath, and through the medium of Mr. Rack,[53] a bailiff is sent to me, who, if he is acquainted with the best courses of cropping, will answer my purposes as a director or Superintendant of my Farms. He has the appearance of a plain honest Farmer; is industrious; and, from the character given of him by a Mr. Peacy (with whom he has lived many years) is understanding in the management of Stock, and of most matters for which he is employed. How far his abilities may be equal to a pretty extensive concern, is questionable. And what is still worse, he has come over with improper ideas; for instead of preparing his mind to meet a ruinous course of cropping, exhausted Lands, and numberless inconveniences into which we had been thrown by an eight years War, he seems to have expected that he was coming to well organized Farms, and that he was to have met Plows, Harrows, and all the other implements of Husbandry in as high taste as the best farming Counties in England could have exhibited them. How far his fortitude will enable him to encounter these disappointments, or his patience and perseverence will carry him towards the work of reform, remains to be decided. With great esteem etc.[54]

[53] Edmund Rack. He was secretary of the Agriculture Society of Bath, England.

[54] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

To CHARLES ARMAND-TUFFIN

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1786.

Dr. Marquis: I am to acknowledge the receipt of the agreeable letter you did me the honor to write to me on the 20th. of Jany., and at the sametime to congratulate you on the happy event announced in it.

Permit me to assure you that nothing affords me more satisfaction than to receive good news of my friends; and you must allow me the liberty of considering your marriage to an amiable lady, with a handsome fortune, in that point of light.

Indeed I was not surprized at this, because I knew the merits of the Marqs. de la Rouerie entitled him to such a connexion. But I must confess, I was a little pleased, if not surprised, to find him think quite like an American on the subject of matrimony and domestic felicity. For in my estimation more permanent and genuine happiness is to be found in the sequestered walks of connubial life, than in the giddy rounds of promiscuous pleasure, or the more tumultuous and imposing scenes of successful ambition.

This sentiment will account, in a degree, for my not making a visit to Europe: other reasons may conspire to prevent me from enjoying the heart-felt satisfaction I shou'd experience in embracing my friends on that continent. Their kind sollicitude and invitations are, however, entitled to my cordial acknowledgments; and you may be persuaded, it will not be among the least of my regrets on this occasion, that the circumstances preclude me from receiving the *welcome,* and witnessing the *happiness,* I should expect to meet with at the Chateau de la Rouerie.

I enter so little into disquisitions and politics, that I could hardly do justice to the subject, should I undertake to dilate

upon it. I have understood, in general, that Congress have taken arrangements for the payment of the interest due on Securities given to foreigners who served in their Army. A timely and efficacious application to the States will, I hope, in future produce more punctuality, and supercede the necessity of any interference on my part, which it appears to me would be improper on many accounts.

Mrs. Washington desires her compliments may be acceptable to Madame la Marquise de la Rouerie and yourself; with a similar request, I have the honor, etc.[55]

To JOHN FRANCIS MERCER

Mount Vernon, August 12, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The Clerks notes in the Suits ordered by you on the Bonds taken at Colo. Geo: Mercer's sale, are (many of them) brought against me; some of wch. without adverting thereto, I have paid, supposing them to have arisen on distresses made by Mr. Muse for my Rents. A few days ago a Bill from the Clerk, I believe, of Berkeley, was handed to me amounting to near six hundred pounds of Tobacco, which not being convenient for me to pay, was returned. I shall be obliged to you in future when writs are ordered, to direct these notes into some other channel. I am threatened also (as you may see by the enclosed) in another manner on the same Accot.

I am led from these circumstances to hope that the suits have been, or soon will be productive; for, tho' painful to reiterate, the fact is that I am *really* in want of money. The almost total loss of my Corn last year, the scantiness of my Crop of Wheat this (in which I am only a common sufferer), and the probable destruction of my Corn by the Chinch-bug, in which I stand

[55] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

almost alone, deprives me of all hope of aid from these sources; which is the more distressing to me as I am at this time involved in more than common expence to finish my house and to make the repairs which were found wanting when it come to be examined. I am, etc.[56]

To THEODORICK BLAND

Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786.

Dear Sir: By Colo. Fitzhugh I had the satisfaction to receive the humorous accot.[57] you were pleased to give me of your nocturnal journey to Fredericksburg. I recollect very well, the Lady whom you mention to have had for a fellow traveller, and if you should chance to be in her company again, I should be much obliged by your presenting my compliments to her. The even tenor of my life (in which I can expect to meet with few extraordinary adventures) as well as my long seclusion in a great measure, from the exhilirating scenes of mixed society, must be an apology for my not attempting (with such provocatives to gaiety) to say some more sprightly things in reply to the brilliancy of her dialogue; or the vivacity with which you have reported it. I commend you, however, for passing the time in as merry a manner as you possibly could; it is assuredly better to go laughing than crying thro' the rough journey of life.

I have mentioned your request to Colo. Humphreys, who is still at Mt. Vernon and who has put a copy of his last poem into my hands to be forwarded with his compliments to you. He has farther desired me to inform you, in answer to the civil things you have said of it, that he feels himself singularly happy

[56] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On August 14 Washington signed an agreement with James Lawson to do ditching at Mount Vernon. This agreement is in the *Washington Papers*.

[57] Bland's "humorous" account is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

whenever he finds that his works are honored with the approbation of men of taste and liberallity. He regrets that he cannot send you the copy of a former poem, which after being several times reprinted in Europe, has lately been translated by the Marqs. de Chastelleux, and received with a great deal of applause at Paris.

I shall always be happy to give and receive communications on improvements in farming, and the various branches of agriculture. This is in my opinion, an object of infinite importance to the country; I consider it to be the proper source of American wealth and happiness. Whose streams might become more copious and diffusive, if gentlemen of leisure and capacity would turn their attention to it, and bring the result of their experiments together? Nothing but cultivation is wanting. Our lot has certainly destined a good country for our inheritance. We begin already to attract the notice of foreigners of distinction. A French general officer whose name is Du Plessis is now at Mount Vernon on his way to Georgia, with a design to settle there as a farmer.

Sequestered as I am, from the bustlings and intrigues of the world, in the calm walks of private life; I can hardly flatter myself with being able to give much light or assistance, to those who may be engag'd in passing thro' the dark and thorny paths of politics. I can only repeat what I have formerly told my countrymen in a very serious manner "that honesty will be found, on every experiment, the best policy". How far arguments deduced from this *topic,* and from the *present alarming* troubles in Rhode Island, can with pertinancy and force be made use of against any attempts to procure a paper currency in the State, I leave to your judgment to decide. The advantages which are to be derived from Seminaries of learning, from the improvement of our roads, a proper

establishment of our Militia, the extension of inland navigation &c. must have struck you in too forcible a manner to need a remembrancer.

My sentiments respecting fœderal measures, in general, are so well known that it is unnecessary to reiterate them. The two Mrs. Washingtons and my nephew join in compliments with me to Mrs. Bland and yourself, and I am, etc.[58]

To MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE

Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786.

My dr. Marqs: I will not conceal that my numerous correspondencies are daily becoming irksome to me; yet I always receive your letters with augmenting satisfaction, and therefore rejoice with you in the measures which are likely to be productive of a more frequent intercourse between our two nations. Thus, motives of a private as well as of a public nature conspire to give me pleasure, in finding that the active policy of France is preparing to take advantage of the supine stupidity of England, with respect to our commerce.

While the latter by its impolitic duties and restrictions is driving our Ships incessantly from its harbours; the former seems by the invitations it is giving to stretch forth the friendly hand to invite them into its Ports. I am happy in a conviction, that there may be established between France and the U. S., such a mutual intercourse of good offices and reciprocal interests, as cannot fail to be attended with the happiest consequences. Nations are not influenced, as individuals may be, by disinterested friendships; but, when it is their interest to live in amity, we have little reason to apprehend any rupture. This principle of union can hardly exist in a more distin-

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

guished manner between two nations, than it does between France and the United States. There are many articles of manufacture which we stand absolutely in need of and shall continue to have occasion for so long as we remain an agricultural people, which will be while lands are so cheap and plenty, that is to say, for ages to come.

In the mean time we shall have large quantities of timber, fish, oil, wheat, Tobo., rice, Indigo, &c. to dispose of: Money we have not. Now it is obvious that we must have recourse for the Goods and manufactures we may want, to the nation which will enable us to pay for them by receiving our Produce in return. Our commerce with any of the great manufacturing Kingdoms of Europe will therefore be in proportion to the facility of making remittance, which such manufacturing nation may think proper to afford us. On the other hand, France has occasion for many of our productions and raw materials; let her judge whether it is most expedient to receive them by direct importation and to pay for them in goods; or to obtain them thro' the circuitous channel of Britain and to pay for them in money as she formerly did.

I know that Britain arrogantly expects we will sell our produce wherever we can find a market and bring the money to purchase goods from her; I know that she vainly hopes to retain what share she pleases in our trade, in consequence of our prejudices in favor of her fashions and manufactures; but these are illusions, which will vanish and disappoint her, as the dreams of conquest have already done. Experience is constantly teaching us, that these predilections were founded in error. We find the quality and price of the French goods we receive in many instances, to be better than the quality and price of the English. Time, and a more thorough acquaintance with the business may be necessary to instruct your

merchants in the choice and assortment of Goods necessary for such a Country. As to an ability for giving credit, in which the English merchants boast a superiority, I am confident it would be happy for America if the practice could be entirely abolished.

However unimportant America may be considered at present, and however Britain may affect to despise her trade, there will assuredly come a day, when this country will have some weight in the scale of Empires. While connected with us as Colonies only, was not Britain the first power in the World? Since the dissolution of that connexion, does not France occupy the same illustrious place? Your successful endeavors my Dr. Marqs., to promote the interests of your two Countries (as you justly call them) must give you the most unadulterated satisfaction: be assured the measures which have lately been taken with regard to the two Articles of *Oil* and *Tobacco,* have tended very much to endear you to your fellow Citizens on this side of the Atlantic.

Altho' I pretend to no peculiar information respecting commercial affairs, nor any foresight into the scenes of futurity; yet as the member of an infant empire, as a Philanthropist by character, and (if I may be allowed the expression) as a Citizen of the great republic of humanity at large; I cannot help turning my attention sometimes to this subject. I would be understood to mean, I cannot avoid reflecting with pleasure on the probable influence that commerce may hereafter have on human manners and society in general. On these occasions I consider how mankind may be connected like one great family in fraternal ties. I indulge a fond, perhaps an enthusiastic idea, that as the world is evidently much less barbarous than it has been, its melioration must still be progressive; that

nations are becoming more humanized in their policy, that the subjects of ambition and causes for hostility are daily diminishing, and, in fine, that the period is not very remote, when the benefits of a liberal and free commerce will, pretty generally, succeed to the devastations and horrors of war.

Some of the late treaties which have been entered into, and particularly that between the King of Prussia and the Ud. States, seem to constitute a new era in negotiation, and to promise the happy consequences I have just now been mentioning. But let me ask you my Dr. Marquis, in such an enlightened, in such a liberal age, how is it possible the great maritime powers of Europe should submit to pay an annual tribute to the little piratical States of Barbary? Would to Heaven we had a navy able to reform those enemies to mankind, or crush them into non-existence.

I forbear to enter into a discussion of our domestic Politics, because there is little interesting to be said upon them, and perhaps it is best to be silent, since I could not disguise or palliate where I might think them erroneous. The British still hold the frontier Posts, and are determined to do so. The Indians commit some trifling ravages, but there is nothing like a general or even open war. You will have heard what a loss we have met with by the death of poor Genl. Greene. General McDougal and Colo. Tilghman are also dead.

It is a great satisfaction to have it in my power to pay some attention to Monsr. Du Plessis, by whom I had the happiness of receiving your last letter: he is now at Mount Vernon on his way to Georgia.

You will see by the length to which I have extended this letter, that I can never find myself weary of conversing with you. Adieu, My Dr. Marqs. Mrs. Washington and the family

desire to be most respectfully presented to Made. de la Fayette, to whom, I pray you also to offer my very best homage; and to believe that I am etc.[59]

To MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX

Mount Vernon, August 18, 1786.

My Dr. Marquis: I cannot omit to seize the earliest occasion, to acknowledge the receipt of the very affectionate letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 22d. of May; as well as to thank you for the *present* of your Travels in America and the translation of Colo. Humphreys's Poem, all of which came safe to hand by the same conveyance.

Knowing, as I did, the candour, liberality and philanthropy of the Marquis de Chastellux, I was prepared to disbelieve any imputations that might militate agst. these amiable qualities. For characters and habits are not easily taken up, or suddenly laid aside. Nor does that mild species of philosophy which aims at promoting human happiness, ever belye itself by deviating from the generous and godlike pursuit. Having notwithstanding understood that some misrepresentations of the work in question, had been circulated; I was happy to learn that you had taken the most effectual method to put a stop to their circulation, by publishing a more ample and correct edition. Colo. Humphreys (who has been some weeks at Mount Vernon) confirm'd me in the sentiment by giving a most flattering account of the whole performance: he has also put into my hands the translation of that part in which you say such, and so many handsome things of me; that (altho' no sceptic on ordinary occasions) I may perhaps be allowed to doubt

[59] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

whether your friendship and partiality have not, in this one instance, acquired an ascendency over your cooler judgment.

Having been thus unwarily, and I may be permitted to add, almost unavoidably betrayed into a kind of necessity to speak of myself, and not wishing to resume that subject, I choose to close it forever by observing, that as, on the one hand, I consider it an indubitable mark of mean-spiritedness and pitiful vanity to court applause from the pen or tongue of man; so on the other, I believe it to be a proof of false modesty or an unworthy affectation of humility to appear altogether insensible to the *commendations* of the virtuous and enlightened part of our species. Perhaps nothing can excite more perfect harmony in the soul than to have this string vibrate in unison with the internal consciousness of rectitude in our intentions and an humble hope of approbation from the supreme disposer of all things.

I have communicated to Colonel Humphreys that paragraph in your letter wch. announces the very favorable reception his Poem has met with in France. Upon the principles I have just laid down, he cannot be indifferent to the applauses of so enlightened a nation, nor to the suffrages of the King and Queen who have been pleased to honor it with their royal approbation.

We have no news on this side the Atlantic worth the pains of sending across it. The country is recovering rapidly from the ravages of the war: the seeds of population are scattered far in the wilderness: agriculture is prosecuted with industry: the works of Peace, such as opening rivers, building bridges &c., are carried on with spirit. Trade is not so successful as we could wish, our State Governments are well administered. Some objects in our fœderal system might probably be altered for the better. I rely much on the good sense of my countrymen, and

trust that a superintending Providence will disappoint the hopes of our Enemies. With sentimts. of the sincerest esteem etc.[60]

To METCALF BOWLER[61]

Mount Vernon, August 19, 1786.

Sir: I have received your letter of the 21st. of July together with the Treatise on Agriculture and practical Husbandry. I consider the latter as a mark of attention which merits my warmest acknowledgments.

It is a subject highly worth the attention of every gentleman in this country who has leisure, abilities, or opportunity to improve it. It is the only source from which we can at present draw any real or permanent advantage; and in my opinion it must be a great (if not the sole) means of our attaining to that degree of respectability and importance which we ought to hold in the world. I am, etc.[60]

To THOMAS NEWTON, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, August 19, 1786.

Dr. Sir: Inclosed is a duplicate of my letter to you of the 26th. of May which was forwarded by Peter Virwins who received fifty barrels of superfine Flour to be deliver'd to you at Norfolk. It is now almost three months since the flour was sent: as I have not heard from you, and am unacquainted with Mr. Virwin, I do not know whether it has come to your hands or not.

[60] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On August 18 Washington wrote also to Clement Biddle, sending two window curtains "which I pray you to get new dyed of the same color, *green*, and returned to me as soon as may be. . . . The price of Mr. Howell's leather is not cheaper than it is sold in Alexandria, and the freight would make it come higher." A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[61] Of Newport R. I.

If you have received it, and it is sold, I should be glad to know what it sold for; if it is not sold, should wish to know what it will sell for, as, from the short crops of wheat, I think it must now fetch a pretty good price. I am, etc.[62]

To THOMAS HUTCHINS

Mount Vernon, August 20, 1786.

Sir: You will see by the enclosed letter from the Marqs. de la Fayette to me, that the Empress of Russia is desirous of obtaining some authentic documents respecting the languages of the natives of this Country, for the purpose of compiling an universal Dictionary. As I have thought no person was more in condition to accomplish that essential service for the republic of letters than yourself, I have taken the liberty of transmitting a specimen of the vocabulary to you, together with a request that you do me the favor of paying as early and accurate attention to the completion of the matter, as your avocations will admit. Persuaded that a gentleman of your taste for science in general, and particularly of your capacity for acquiring the information in question, will enter upon the task with pleasure, I make no apology for troubling you with it. Nor do I think it necessary to add anything farther, than that it may be expedient to extend the vocabulary as far as, with the aid of your friends, you conveniently can; and that the greatest possible precision and exactitude will be indispensable in committing the Indian words to paper, by a just orthography.

With sentiments of esteem etc.[63]

[62] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[63] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. A duplicate of this letter, addressed to Col. George Morgan, near Princeton, N. J., was (1907) stated to be in the possession of A. S. Morgan, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

To THE SECRETARY AT WAR

Mount Vernon, August 21, 1786.

Dr. Sir: The inclosed letter I received a short time since. As I am wholly unacquainted with the writer, and circumstances therein mentioned, I can only say, that if the facts are such as there alledged, I think the sufferer is entitled to some redress; but how far it may be in the power of Congress to comply with petitions of this nature I am not able to say. You undoubtedly know much better than I do, and I am sure your exertions will never be wanting to have justice done to those who have suffered by adhering to the cause of our Country. I am, etc.[64]

To JONATHAN LORING AUSTIN

Mount Vernon, August 23, 1786.

Sir: I have received your Oration of the 4th. of July, which you did me the honor to send me; and am much obliged to you for so polite a mark of attention. I have perused it with a great deal of pleasure, and hope that the anniversary of that day will ever be commemorated in this country as the era from which we may date our happiness and importance. I am, etc.[64]

To REVEREND JOHN WITHERSPOON

Mount Vernon, August 23, 1786.

Revd. Sir: The last Post brought me your favor of the 14th. You have been misinformed respecting the congregation of

[64] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On August 22 Washington wrote briefly to Maurice Desdevens, a former captain of Canadian militia in Montgomery's expedition against Quebec, that he had forwarded his letter to Knox. A copy of this letter is in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

Pohick. It is of the Episcopal Church and at this time has an incumbent; of which I give you the earliest notice for the information of Mr. Wilson.[65]

A Church above this, formerly under the same Ministry, is, I believe, unprovided; but of what Religion the people thereabout *now* are, I am unable to say. Most probably a medley as they have had Methodist, and Baptist preachers of all kinds among them. With respect, I am, etc.[66]

To JAMES HILL

Mount Vernon, August 29, 1786.

Sir: I have been in continual expectation ever since my return to private life (now near three years) of receiving a statement of the accots. between us. This not having yet happened, and finding sums which I expected were due to me (especially in the case of Mr. Newton of Norfolk from whom I thought a large balance was due to me) charged as having been paid to you, it makes it indispensably necessary for me to be furnished with a precise and compleat accot. of all the transactions of my business which had been committed to your care from the date of the last settlement which I made with you myself, to the present moment. Shewing, if monies have been paid to others or myself, the sums, and by what authority it was done. Without these it is impossible for me to adjust my own accounts, or bring my business to a close with others. I pray you therefore not to delay complying with this request, and it will oblige Yrs., etc.

P. S. That this letter may be certain of getting to your hands, I have requested Mr. Henley to send it by a special messenger.

[65] James Wilson, a Scotch Presbyterian minister.
[66] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Your answer will come safe, and more expeditiously by the Post, than by a private conveyance, and is the mode I would prefer receiving it.[67]

To DIEGO DE GARDOQUI

Mount Vernon, August 30, 1786.

Sir: The day before yesterday gave me the honor of your Excellency's favor, written on the 12th. of June, with a postscript thereto of the 22d. of July. It was accompanied by the cloth made of the wool of the Vicuna, which indeed is of a softness and richness which I have never seen before, and is truly worthy of being called his Majesty's *true* manufactured cloth.

For your Excellency's goodness in presenting me with this specimen of it, I pray you to accept my best acknowledgements. I receive it Sir, as a mark of your polite attention to me, and shall wear it with much pleasure as a memento thereof. The color is really beautiful, and being natural can never fade.

I feel myself much indebted to your Excelly. for communicating the testimonies of my gratitude to the King, thro' the medium of His Excelly. Count de Florida Blanca, for his royal present of the Jack Asses; one of which arrived very safe, and promises to be a most valuable animal. I am endeavouring to provide a female, that the advantages which are to be derived from this Jack may not end with *his* life.

I can omit no occasion of assuring your Excellency of the high sense I entertain of the many marks of polite attention I have received from you; nor of the pleasure I should feel in the honor of expressing it at this seat of my retirement from public life, if you should ever feel an inclination to make an excursion into the middle States. I have the honor, etc.[67]

[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

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